

DISCUSSION DRAFT
Summary of Proposed Changes to
Chapter 173-26, Shoreline Management Act
Geoduck Aquaculture

Overview

Ecology has developed this suggested rule language to generate early discussion prior to submitting the draft rule in late-June. We've considered the requirements of HB 2220 (2007), Shellfish Advisory Regulatory Committee recommendations (2009 report), recent Attorney General decisions and court cases, local shoreline programs recently updated in Whatcom County and Jefferson County, and consistency and applicability across the Shoreline Master Program Guidelines.

HB 2220 (which requires this rulemaking) is predicated on a trio of actions: 1) allow geoduck aquaculture to continue and expand based on our current scientific understanding; 2) pursue scientific research on a specific set of issues relating to potential impacts of geoduck aquaculture; and 3) apply what we learn to this use as new science becomes available.

The Shoreline Master Program Guidelines are clear that commercial aquaculture is an important and economically valuable water-dependent use. On one hand, shellfish operators should have assurances that they can access intertidal lands with clean water and other attributes essential to growing geoduck for human consumption, and retrieve their property (grown geoducks) once planted. On the other hand, there is the need for compatibility with other shoreline uses and avoiding environmental impacts.

This early suggested language is one path forward we see that adheres to the overarching goals of the Shoreline Management Act; ensures no net loss of ecological functions; meets existing legal requirements; acknowledges that commercial aquaculture is a water-dependent use; and yet maximizes local government flexibility in conditioning and siting of commercial geoduck operations.

The most significant proposed change is the requirement of a conditional use permit for commercial aquaculture in critical saltwater habitats. These habitats include features such as eelgrass beds, forage fish spawning beds, areas used by priority species, etc. These habitat features need the highest level of protection to ensure economic viability of related resource industries and to meet recovery goals in the Puget Sound Action Agenda.

Commercial aquaculture is included as a “critical saltwater habitat” to provide for a higher level of water quality and protection from conflicting uses (see SFEIS, 2003). However, commercial aquaculture is a use, not a habitat.

In this discussion draft, we propose requiring a conditional use permit for commercial geoduck aquaculture in critical saltwater habitats to enable local governments the ability to:

- Reconcile no net loss of ecological functions between different types of critical saltwater habitats.
- Provide equitable treatment of all new and expanded aquaculture.
- Provide for periodic review of geoduck operations and updating of limits and conditions based on new research and information.

Elsewhere in the rule we seek to increase water quality and other site considerations for commercial aquaculture, and compel local governments to classify sites for commercial geoduck aquaculture.

We look forward to your comments and suggestions.

More information

- Rulemaking
website: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/shorelines/smp/rulemaking.html>
- HB
2220: http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/shellfishcommittee/pdf/2220_Final_Bill.pdf
- SARC Recommendations report to legislature: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/biblio/0906001.html>

Amendment Index

The index below outlines changes we’re considering at this point related to geoduck aquaculture. Section numbers are hyperlinked to text.

[WAC 173-26-201\(2\)\(d\)\(i\)](#) and (ii) – Aquaculture as a water dependent use: This section requires “reserving areas for water dependent uses”. Specific reference to commercial geoduck aquaculture added.

[WAC 173-26-201\(3\)\(c\)\(xi\)](#) – Inventory: Specific information to be compiled for geoduck aquaculture added.

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[WAC 173-26-201\(3\)\(d\)\(iii\)](#) – Avoiding cumulative impacts:

Throughout, we have a challenge that an attorney general decision (<http://www.atg.wa.gov/AGOOpinions/opinion.aspx?section=topic&id=10248>) said geoduck aquaculture is not “development” in every situation. The rule in some places seems to use “development” in a generic (rather than SMA-centric) way. We’ve added “uses” in two locations to ensure that geoduck aquaculture is subject to these provisions.

[WAC 173-26-201\(3\)\(d\)\(vii\)](#) – Language added for emphasis on the importance of water quality for shellfish aquaculture.

[WAC 173-26-211\(5\)\(b\)\(ii\)](#) – The term “use” replaces “development” to make the paragraph consistent throughout.

[WAC 173-26-211\(5\)\(c\)\(ii\)\(E\)](#) – New section added to Aquatic Environment designation. Local governments should site commercial geoduck aquaculture where conditions are suitable. Also clarifies that local governments may reserve appropriate areas for environmental protection and restoration.

[WAC 173-26-221\(2\)\(c\)\(iii\)\(A\) and \(B\)](#) – Critical Saltwater Habitats:

Critical saltwater habitats include features such as eelgrass beds, forage fish spawning beds, areas used by priority species, etc. These features need the highest level of protection to ensure economic viability of related resource industries, and to meet recovery goals in the Puget Sound Action Agenda. Commercial aquaculture is included as a “critical saltwater habitat” to provide for a higher level of water quality and protection from conflicting uses (see SFEIS, 2003). However, commercial geoduck aquaculture is a use, not a habitat.

In this discussion draft, we propose leaving commercial aquaculture in the description of critical saltwater habitats and requiring a conditional use permit when it occurs within other critical saltwater habitats.

[WAC 173-26-241\(2\)\(b\)\(ii\)\(D\)](#) – New section added: Conditional use permit (CUP) for commercial geoduck aquaculture to increase consistency between federal, state, and local permit requirements such as limits and conditions.

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[WAC 173-26-241\(3\)\(b\)\(i\)\(A\), \(B\) and \(C\) \(I\), \(II\), \(III\) and \(IV\)](#) – New sections: Aquaculture use provisions. Proposed revisions to general provisions; extensive new sections proposed on geoduck aquaculture to meet requirements of HB 2220.

Our current suggestion for the conditional use permit is illustrated in the attached Local Permit and Related Actions Table. Under this suggested scenario, we would require a conditional use permit (CUP) for commercial geoduck aquaculture. The permit would renew every five years. New best management practices would be incorporated into the updated permit as applicable and would apply to the new cycle of planting and all subsequent harvesting of geoducks planted(ex. buffer from eelgrass beds might increase or decrease based on new research).

A CUP would give Ecology review authority. Such review would allow us to could consider recent science and knowledge, cumulative impacts, statewide interests, compatibility with state and federal permitting requirements, and improvements needed to our shoreline management program technical assistance and guidelines.

See attached table: Shoreline Master Program - Proposed Local Geoduck Aquaculture Permit and Related Actions (DRAFT 5-5-10)

Shoreline Master Program: Proposed Local Geoduck Aquaculture Permit and Related Actions

Draft 5-6-10

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021
Permit actions	First site plan submitted and conditions for approval reviewed in context of existing BMP guidance; CUP required for commercial operations					Site plan updated and conditions for approval reviewed in context of updated BMP guidance					Site plan updated and conditions for approval reviewed in context of updated BMP guidance
Planting and harvesting actions	Planting and subsequent harvesting that follows BMPs →										
						Planting and subsequent harvesting that follows updated BMPs →					
											Planting and subsequent harvesting that follows updated BMPs →
State actions	Ecology publishes and other guidance based on current science and results	Sea Grant research available	Sea Grant research completed (if funded)	Ecology updates BMP and other guidance based on current science and results					Ecology updates BMP and other guidance based on current science and results		

Pre-Draft 2

Pre-Draft 2

Chapter 173-26, Part III: Shoreline Master Program Guidelines

WAC 173-26-201 Comprehensive process to prepare or amend shoreline master programs. (1) **Applicability.** This section outlines a comprehensive process to prepare or amend a shoreline master program. Local governments shall incorporate the steps indicated if one or more of the following criteria apply:

(a) The master program amendments being considered represent a significant modification to shoreline management practices within the local jurisdiction, they modify more than one environment designation boundary, or significantly add, change or delete use regulations;

(b) Physical shoreline conditions have changed significantly, such as substantial changes in shoreline use or priority habitat integrity, since the last comprehensive master program amendment;

(c) The master program amendments being considered contain provisions that will affect a substantial portion of the local government's shoreline areas;

(d) There are substantive issues that must be addressed on a comprehensive basis. This may include issues such as salmon recovery, major use conflicts or public access;

(e) The current master program and the comprehensive plan are not mutually consistent;

(f) There has been no previous comprehensive master program amendment since the original master program adoption; or

(g) Monitoring and adaptive management indicate that changes

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are necessary to avoid loss of ecological functions.

Other revisions that do not meet the above criteria may be made without undertaking this comprehensive process provided that the process conforms to the requirements of WAC 173-26-030 through 173-26-160.

All master program amendments are subject to approval by the department as provided in RCW 90.58.090 (3) and (4).

(2) **Basic concepts.**

(a) **Use of scientific and technical information.** To satisfy the requirements for the use of scientific and technical information in RCW 90.58.100(1), local governments shall incorporate the following two steps into their master program development and amendment process.

First, identify and assemble the most current, accurate, and complete scientific and technical information available that is applicable to the issues of concern. The context, scope, magnitude, significance, and potential limitations of the scientific information should be considered. At a minimum, make use of and, where applicable, incorporate all available scientific information, aerial photography, inventory data, technical assistance materials, manuals and services from reliable sources of science. Local governments should also contact relevant state agencies, universities, affected Indian tribes, port districts and private parties for available information. While adequate scientific information and methodology necessary for development of a master program should be available, if any person, including local

government, chooses to initiate scientific research with the expectation that it will be used as a basis for master program provisions, that research shall use accepted scientific methods, research procedures and review protocols. Local governments are encouraged to work interactively with neighboring jurisdictions, state resource agencies, affected Indian tribes, and other local government entities such as port districts to address technical issues beyond the scope of existing information resources or locally initiated research.

Local governments should consult the technical assistance materials produced by the department. When relevant information is available and unless there is more current or specific information available, those technical assistance materials shall constitute an element of scientific and technical information as defined in these guidelines and the use of which is required by the act.

Second, base master program provisions on an analysis incorporating the most current, accurate, and complete scientific or technical information available. Local governments should be prepared to identify the following:

(i) Scientific information and management recommendations on which the master program provisions are based;

(ii) Assumptions made concerning, and data gaps in, the scientific information; and

(iii) Risks to ecological functions associated with master program provisions. Address potential risks as described in WAC 173-26-201 (3)(d).

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The requirement to use scientific and technical information in these guidelines does not limit a local jurisdiction's authority to solicit and incorporate information, experience, and anecdotal evidence provided by interested parties as part of the master program amendment process. Such information should be solicited through the public participation process described in WAC 173-26-201 (3)(b). Where information collected by or provided to local governments conflicts or is inconsistent, the local government shall base master program provisions on a reasoned, objective evaluation of the relative merits of the conflicting data.

(b) **Adaptation of policies and regulations.** Effective shoreline management requires the evaluation of changing conditions and the modification of policies and regulations to address identified trends and new information. Local governments should monitor actions taken to implement the master program and shoreline conditions to facilitate appropriate updates of master program provisions to improve shoreline management over time. In reviewing proposals to amend master programs, the department shall evaluate whether the change promotes achievement of the policies of the master program and the act. As provided in WAC 173-26-171 (3)(d), ecology will periodically review these guidelines, based in part on information provided by local government, and through that process local government will receive additional guidance on significant shoreline management issues that may require amendments to master programs.

(c) **Protection of ecological functions of the shorelines.** This

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chapter implements the act's policy on protection of shoreline natural resources through protection and restoration of ecological functions necessary to sustain these natural resources. The concept of ecological functions recognizes that any ecological system is composed of a wide variety of interacting physical, chemical and biological components, that are interdependent in varying degrees and scales, and that produce the landscape and habitats as they exist at any time. Ecological functions are the work performed or role played individually or collectively within ecosystems by these components.

As established in WAC 173-26-186(8), these guidelines are designed to assure, at minimum, no net loss of ecological functions necessary to sustain shoreline natural resources and to plan for restoration of ecological functions where they have been impaired. Managing shorelines for protection of their natural resources depends on sustaining the functions provided by:

- ✎ Ecosystem-wide processes such as those associated with the flow and movement of water, sediment and organic materials; the presence and movement of fish and wildlife and the maintenance of water quality.

- ✎ Individual components and localized processes such as those associated with shoreline vegetation, soils, water movement through the soil and across the land surface and the composition and configuration of the beds and banks of water bodies.

The loss or degradation of the functions associated with ecosystem-wide processes, individual components and localized

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processes can significantly impact shoreline natural resources and may also adversely impact human health and safety. Shoreline master programs shall address ecological functions associated with applicable ecosystem-wide processes, individual components and localized processes identified in the ecological systems analysis described in WAC 173-26-201 (3)(d)(i).

Nearly all shoreline areas, even substantially developed or degraded areas, retain important ecological functions. For example, an intensely developed harbor area may also serve as a fish migration corridor and feeding area critical to species survival. Also, ecosystems are interconnected. For example, the life cycle of anadromous fish depends upon the viability of freshwater, marine, and terrestrial shoreline ecosystems, and many wildlife species associated with the shoreline depend on the health of both terrestrial and aquatic environments. Therefore, the policies for protecting and restoring ecological functions generally apply to all shoreline areas, not just those that remain relatively unaltered.

Master programs shall contain policies and regulations that assure, at minimum, no net loss of ecological functions necessary to sustain shoreline natural resources. To achieve this standard while accommodating appropriate and necessary shoreline uses and development, master programs should establish and apply:

- ✎ Environment designations with appropriate use and development standards; and

- ✎ Provisions to address the impacts of specific common shoreline uses, development activities and modification actions; and

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✎ Provisions for the protection of critical areas within the shoreline; and

✎ Provisions for mitigation measures and methods to address unanticipated impacts.

When based on the inventory and analysis requirements and completed consistent with the specific provisions of these guidelines, the master program should ensure that development will be protective of ecological functions necessary to sustain existing shoreline natural resources and meet the standard. The concept of "net" as used herein, recognizes that any development has potential or actual, short-term or long-term impacts and that through application of appropriate development standards and employment of mitigation measures in accordance with the mitigation sequence, those impacts will be addressed in a manner necessary to assure that the end result will not diminish the shoreline resources and values as they currently exist. Where uses or development that impact ecological functions are necessary to achieve other objectives of RCW 90.58.020, master program provisions shall, to the greatest extent feasible, protect existing ecological functions and avoid new impacts to habitat and ecological functions before implementing other measures designed to achieve no net loss of ecological functions.

Master programs shall also include policies that promote restoration of ecological functions, as provided in WAC 173-26-201 (2)(f), where such functions are found to have been impaired based on analysis described in WAC 173-26-201 (3)(d)(i). It is intended

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that local government, through the master program, along with other regulatory and nonregulatory programs, contribute to restoration by planning for and fostering restoration and that such restoration occur through a combination of public and private programs and actions. Local government should identify restoration opportunities through the shoreline inventory process and authorize, coordinate and facilitate appropriate publicly and privately initiated restoration projects within their master programs. The goal of this effort is master programs which include planning elements that, when implemented, serve to improve the overall condition of habitat and resources within the shoreline area of each city and county.

(d) **Preferred uses.** As summarized in WAC 173-26-176, the act establishes policy that preference be given to uses that are unique to or dependent upon a shoreline location. Consistent with this policy, these guidelines use the terms "water-dependent," "water-related," and "water-enjoyment," as defined in WAC 173-26-020, when discussing appropriate uses for various shoreline areas.

Shoreline areas, being a limited ecological and economic resource, are the setting for competing uses and ecological protection and restoration activities. Consistent with RCW 90.58.020 and WAC 173-26-171 through 173-26-186, local governments shall, when determining allowable uses and resolving use conflicts on shorelines within their jurisdiction, apply the following preferences and priorities in the order listed below, starting with

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(d)(i) of this subsection. For shorelines of statewide significance, also apply the preferences as indicated in WAC 173-26-251(2).

(i) Reserve appropriate areas for protecting and restoring ecological functions to control pollution and prevent damage to the natural environment and public health. In reserving areas, local governments should consider areas that are ecologically intact from the uplands through the aquatic parts of the area, aquatic areas that adjoin permanently protected uplands, tidelands in public ownership, and tidelands not designated by the state for water-dependent use or development. Local governments should ensure that these areas are designated consistent with constitutional limits.

(ii) Reserve shoreline areas for water-dependent and associated water-related uses such as marinas, ports and commercial geoduck aquaculture. Harbor areas, established pursuant to Article XV of the state Constitution, and other areas that have reasonable commercial navigational accessibility and necessary support facilities such as transportation and utilities should be reserved for water-dependent and water-related uses that are associated with commercial navigation unless the local governments can demonstrate that adequate shoreline is reserved for future water-dependent and water-related uses and unless protection of the existing natural resource values of such areas preclude such uses.

Local governments may prepare master program provisions to allow mixed-use developments that include and support

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water-dependent uses and address specific conditions that affect water-dependent uses. (iii) Reserve shoreline areas for other water-related and water-enjoyment uses that are compatible with ecological protection and restoration objectives.

(iv) Locate single-family residential uses where they are appropriate and can be developed without significant impact to ecological functions or displacement of water-dependent uses.

(v) Limit nonwater-oriented uses to those locations where the above described uses are inappropriate or where nonwater-oriented uses demonstrably contribute to the objectives of the Shoreline Management Act.

Evaluation pursuant to the above criteria, local economic and land use conditions, and policies and regulations that assure protection of shoreline resources, may result in determination that other uses are considered as necessary or appropriate and may be accommodated provided that the preferred uses are reasonably provided for in the jurisdiction.

(e) **Environmental impact mitigation.**

(i) To assure no net loss of shoreline ecological functions, master programs shall include provisions that require proposed individual uses and developments to analyze environmental impacts of the proposal and include measures to mitigate environmental impacts not otherwise avoided or mitigated by compliance with the master program and other applicable regulations. To the extent Washington's State Environmental Policy Act of 1971 (SEPA), chapter 43.21C RCW, is applicable, the analysis of such environmental impacts

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shall be conducted consistent with the rules implementing SEPA, which also address environmental impact mitigation in WAC 197-11-660 and define mitigation in WAC 197-11-768. Master programs shall indicate that, where required, mitigation measures shall be applied in the following sequence of steps listed in order of priority, with (e)(i)(A) of this subsection being top priority.

(A) Avoiding the impact altogether by not taking a certain action or parts of an action;

(B) Minimizing impacts by limiting the degree or magnitude of the action and its implementation by using appropriate technology or by taking affirmative steps to avoid or reduce impacts;

(C) Rectifying the impact by repairing, rehabilitating, or restoring the affected environment;

(D) Reducing or eliminating the impact over time by preservation and maintenance operations;

(E) Compensating for the impact by replacing, enhancing, or providing substitute resources or environments; and

(F) Monitoring the impact and the compensation projects and taking appropriate corrective measures.

(ii) In determining appropriate mitigation measures applicable to shoreline development, lower priority measures shall be applied only where higher priority measures are determined to be infeasible or inapplicable.

Consistent with WAC 173-26-186 (5) and (8), master programs shall also provide direction with regard to mitigation for the impact of the development so that:

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(A) Application of the mitigation sequence achieves no net loss of ecological functions for each new development and does not result in required mitigation in excess of that necessary to assure that development will result in no net loss of shoreline ecological functions and not have a significant adverse impact on other shoreline functions fostered by the policy of the act.

(B) When compensatory measures are appropriate pursuant to the mitigation priority sequence above, preferential consideration shall be given to measures that replace the impacted functions directly and in the immediate vicinity of the impact. However, alternative compensatory mitigation within the watershed that addresses limiting factors or identified critical needs for shoreline resource conservation based on watershed or comprehensive resource management plans applicable to the area of impact may be authorized. Authorization of compensatory mitigation measures may require appropriate safeguards, terms or conditions as necessary to ensure no net loss of ecological functions.

(f) **Shoreline restoration planning.** Consistent with principle WAC 173-26-186 (8)(c), master programs shall include goals, policies and actions for restoration of impaired shoreline ecological functions. These master program provisions should be designed to achieve overall improvements in shoreline ecological functions over time, when compared to the status upon adoption of the master program. The approach to restoration planning may vary significantly among local jurisdictions, depending on:

 The size of the jurisdiction;

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- ✎ The extent and condition of shorelines in the jurisdiction;
 - ✎ The availability of grants, volunteer programs or other tools for restoration; and
 - ✎ The nature of the ecological functions to be addressed by restoration planning.

Master program restoration plans shall consider and address the following subjects:

(i) Identify degraded areas, impaired ecological functions, and sites with potential for ecological restoration;

(ii) Establish overall goals and priorities for restoration of degraded areas and impaired ecological functions;

(iii) Identify existing and ongoing projects and programs that are currently being implemented, or are reasonably assured of being implemented (based on an evaluation of funding likely in the foreseeable future), which are designed to contribute to local restoration goals;

(iv) Identify additional projects and programs needed to achieve local restoration goals, and implementation strategies including identifying prospective funding sources for those projects and programs;

(v) Identify timelines and benchmarks for implementing restoration projects and programs and achieving local restoration goals;

(vi) Provide for mechanisms or strategies to ensure that restoration projects and programs will be implemented according to plans and to appropriately review the effectiveness of the projects

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and programs in meeting the overall restoration goals.

(3) **Steps in preparing and amending a master program.**

(a) **Process overview.** This section provides a generalized process to prepare or comprehensively amend a shoreline master program. Local governments may modify the timing of the various steps, integrate the process into other planning activities, add steps to the process, or work jointly with other jurisdictions or regional efforts, provided the provisions of this chapter are met.

The department will provide a shoreline master program amendment checklist to help local governments identify issues to address. The checklist will not create new or additional requirements beyond the provisions of this chapter. The checklist is intended to aid the preparation and review of master program amendments. Local governments shall submit the completed checklist with the proposed master program amendments.

(b) **Participation process.**

(i) **Participation requirements.** Local government shall comply with the provisions of RCW 90.58.130 which states:

"To insure that all persons and entities having an interest in the guidelines and master programs developed under this chapter are provided with a full opportunity for involvement in both their development and implementation, the department and local governments shall:

(1) Make reasonable efforts to inform the people of the state about the shoreline management program of this chapter and in the performance of the responsibilities provided in this chapter, shall

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not only invite but actively encourage participation by all persons and private groups and entities showing an interest in shoreline management programs of this chapter; and

(2) Invite and encourage participation by all agencies of federal, state, and local government, including municipal and public corporations, having interests or responsibilities relating to the shorelines of the state. State and local agencies are directed to participate fully to insure that their interests are fully considered by the department and local governments."

Additionally, the provisions of WAC 173-26-100 apply and include provisions to assure proper public participation and, for local governments planning under the Growth Management Act, the provisions of RCW 36.70A.140 also apply.

At a minimum, all local governments shall be prepared to describe and document their methods to ensure that all interested parties have a meaningful opportunity to participate.

(ii) **Communication with state agencies.** Before undertaking substantial work, local governments shall notify applicable state agencies to identify state interests, relevant regional and statewide efforts, available information, and methods for coordination and input. Contact the department for a list of applicable agencies to be notified.

(iii) **Communication with affected Indian tribes.** Prior to undertaking substantial work, local governments shall notify affected Indian tribes to identify tribal interests, relevant tribal efforts, available information and methods for coordination and

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input. Contact the individual tribes or coordinating bodies such as the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, for a list of affected Indian tribes to be notified.

(c) **Inventory shoreline conditions.** Gather and incorporate all pertinent and available information, existing inventory data and materials from state agencies, affected Indian tribes, watershed management planning, port districts and other appropriate sources. Ensure that, whenever possible, inventory methods and protocols are consistent with those of neighboring jurisdictions and state efforts. The department will provide, to the extent possible, services and resources for inventory work. Contact the department to determine information sources and other relevant efforts. Map inventory information at an appropriate scale.

Local governments shall be prepared to demonstrate how the inventory information was used in preparing their local master program amendments.

Collection of additional inventory information is encouraged and should be coordinated with other watershed, regional, or statewide inventory and planning efforts in order to ensure consistent methods and data protocol as well as effective use of fiscal and human resources. Local governments should be prepared to demonstrate that they have coordinated with applicable interjurisdictional shoreline inventory and planning programs where they exist. Two or more local governments are encouraged to jointly conduct an inventory in order to increase the efficiency of data gathering and comprehensiveness of inventory information. Data
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from interjurisdictional, watershed, or regional inventories may be substituted for an inventory conducted by an individual jurisdiction, provided it meets the requirements of this section.

Local government shall, at a minimum, and to the extent such information is relevant and reasonably available, collect the following information:

(i) Shoreline and adjacent land use patterns and transportation and utility facilities, including the extent of existing structures, impervious surfaces, vegetation and shoreline modifications in shoreline jurisdiction. Special attention should be paid to identification of water-oriented uses and related navigation, transportation and utility facilities.

(ii) Critical areas, including wetlands, aquifer recharge areas, fish and wildlife conservation areas, geologically hazardous areas, and frequently flooded areas. See also WAC 173-26-221.

(iii) Degraded areas and sites with potential for ecological restoration.

(iv) Areas of special interest, such as priority habitats, developing or redeveloping harbors and waterfronts, previously identified toxic or hazardous material clean-up sites, dredged material disposal sites, or eroding shorelines, to be addressed through new master program provisions.

(v) Conditions and regulations in shoreland and adjacent areas that affect shorelines, such as surface water management and land use regulations. This information may be useful in achieving mutual consistency between the master program and other development

regulations.

(vi) Existing and potential shoreline public access sites, including public rights of way and utility corridors.

(vii) General location of channel migration zones, and flood plains.

(viii) Gaps in existing information. During the initial inventory, local governments should identify what additional information may be necessary for more effective shoreline management.

(ix) If the shoreline is rapidly developing or subject to substantial human changes such as clearing and grading, past and current records or historical aerial photographs may be necessary to identify cumulative impacts, such as bulkhead construction, intrusive development on priority habitats, and conversion of harbor areas to nonwater-oriented uses.

(x) If archaeological or historic resources have been identified in shoreline jurisdiction, consult with the state historic preservation office and local affected Indian tribes regarding existing archaeological and historical information.

(xi) When undertaking inventories and analyses, local governments with marine shorelines should identify areas suitable for commercial geoduck aquaculture by compiling information on shoreline characteristics including:

- existing shoreline uses,
- intertidal property ownership,
- water quality,

- areas that meet Department of health shellfish water certification,
- topography and bathymetry,
- sediment type,
- sediment contamination,
- existing aquaculture operations,
- shellfish protection districts,
- designated critical saltwater habitats,
- designated critical areas, and
- other sensitive ecological features and functions.

Commercial geoduck aquaculture should not diminish the ecological functions of other critical saltwater habitats.

(d) **Analyze shoreline issues of concern.** Before establishing specific master program provisions, local governments shall analyze the information gathered in (c) of this subsection and as necessary to ensure effective shoreline management provisions, address the topics below, where applicable.

(i) **Characterization of functions and ecosystem-wide processes.**

(A) Prepare a characterization of shoreline ecosystems and their associated ecological functions. The characterization consists of three steps:

(I) Identify the ecosystem-wide processes and ecological functions based on the list in (d)(i)(C) of this subsection that apply

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to the shoreline(s) of the jurisdiction.

(II) Assess the ecosystem-wide processes to determine their relationship to ecological functions present within the jurisdiction and identify which ecological functions are healthy, which have been significantly altered and/or adversely impacted and which functions may have previously existed and are missing based on the values identified in (d)(i)(D) of this subsection; and

(III) Identify specific measures necessary to protect and/or restore the ecological functions and ecosystem-wide processes.

(B) The characterization of shoreline ecological systems may be achieved by using one or more of the approaches below:

(I) If a regional environmental management plan, such as a watershed plan or coastal erosion study, is ongoing or has been completed, then conduct the characterization either within the framework of the regional plan or use the data provided in the regional plan. This methodology is intended to contribute to an in-depth and comprehensive assessment and characterization.

(II) If a regional environmental management plan has not been completed, use available scientific and technical information, including flood studies, habitat evaluations and studies, water quality studies, and data and information from environmental impact statements. This characterization of ecosystem-wide processes and the impact upon the functions of specific habitats and human health and safety objectives may be of a generalized nature.

(III) One or more local governments may pursue a characterization which includes a greater scope and complexity than

listed in (d)(i)(B)(I) and (II) of this subsection.

(C) Shoreline ecological functions include, but are not limited to:

In rivers and streams and associated flood plains:

Hydrologic: Transport of water and sediment across the natural range of flow variability; attenuating flow energy; developing pools, riffles, gravel bars, recruitment and transport of large woody debris and other organic material.

Shoreline vegetation: Maintaining temperature; removing excessive nutrients and toxic compound, sediment removal and stabilization; attenuation of flow energy; and provision of large woody debris and other organic matter.

Hyporheic functions: Removing excessive nutrients and toxic compound, water storage, support of vegetation, and sediment storage and maintenance of base flows.

Habitat for native aquatic and shoreline-dependent birds, invertebrates, mammals; amphibians; and anadromous and resident native fish: Habitat functions may include, but are not limited to, space or conditions for reproduction; resting, hiding and migration; and food production and delivery.

In lakes:

Hydrologic: Storing water and sediment, attenuating wave energy, removing excessive nutrients and toxic compounds, recruitment of large woody debris and other organic material.

Shoreline vegetation: Maintaining temperature; removing excessive nutrients and toxic compound, attenuating wave energy,

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sediment removal and stabilization; and providing woody debris and other organic matter.

Hyporheic functions: Removing excessive nutrients and toxic compound, water storage, support of vegetation, and sediment storage and maintenance of base flows.

Habitat for aquatic and shoreline-dependent birds, invertebrates, mammals; amphibians; and anadromous and resident native fish: Habitat functions may include, but are not limited to, space or conditions for reproduction, resting, hiding and migration; and food production and delivery.

In marine waters:

Hydrologic: Transporting and stabilizing sediment, attenuating wave and tidal energy, removing excessive nutrients and toxic compounds; recruitment, redistribution and reduction of woody debris and other organic material.

Vegetation: Maintaining temperature; removing excessive nutrients and toxic compound, attenuating wave energy, sediment removal and stabilization; and providing woody debris and other organic matter.

Habitat for aquatic and shoreline-dependent birds, invertebrates, mammals; amphibians; and anadromous and resident native fish: Habitat functions may include, but are not limited to, space or conditions for reproduction, resting, hiding and migration; and food production and delivery.

Wetlands:

Hydrological: Storing water and sediment, attenuating wave
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energy, removing excessive nutrients and toxic compounds, recruiting woody debris and other organic material.

Vegetation: Maintaining temperature; removing excessive nutrients and toxic compound, attenuating wave energy, removing and stabilizing sediment; and providing woody debris and other organic matter.

Hyporheic functions: Removing excessive nutrients and toxic compound, storing water and maintaining base flows, storing sediment and support of vegetation.

Habitat for aquatic and shoreline-dependent birds, invertebrates, mammals; amphibians; and anadromous and resident native fish: Habitat functions may include, but are not limited to, space or conditions for reproduction, resting, hiding and migration; and food production and delivery.

(D) The overall condition of habitat and shoreline resources are determined by the following ecosystem-wide processes and ecological functions:

The distribution, diversity, and complexity of the watersheds, marine environments, and landscape-scale features that form the aquatic systems to which species, populations, and communities are uniquely adapted.

The spatial and temporal connectivity within and between watersheds and along marine shorelines. Drainage network connections include flood plains, wetlands, upslope areas, headwater tributaries, and naturally functioning routes to areas critical for fulfilling life history requirements of aquatic and

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riverine-dependent species.

The shorelines, beaches, banks, marine near-shore habitats, and bottom configurations that provide the physical framework of the aquatic system.

The timing, volume, and distribution of woody debris recruitment in rivers, streams and marine habitat areas.

The water quality necessary to maintain the biological, physical, and chemical integrity of the system and support survival, growth, reproduction, and migration of individuals composing aquatic and riverine communities.

The sediment regime under which aquatic ecosystems evolved. Elements of the sediment regime include the timing, volume, rate, and character of sediment input, storage, and transport.

The range of flow variability sufficient to create and sustain fluvial, aquatic, and wetland habitats, the patterns of sediment, nutrient, and wood routing. The timing, magnitude, duration, and spatial distribution of peak, high, and low flows, and duration of flood plain inundation and water table elevation in meadows and wetlands.

The species composition and structural diversity of plant communities in river and stream areas and wetlands that provides summer and winter thermal regulation, nutrient filtering, appropriate rates of surface erosion, bank erosion, and channel migration and to supply amounts and distributions of woody debris sufficient to sustain physical complexity and stability.

(E) Local governments should use the characterization and
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analysis called for in this section to prepare master program policies and regulations designed to achieve no net loss of ecological functions necessary to support shoreline resources and to plan for the restoration of the ecosystem-wide processes and individual ecological functions on a comprehensive basis over time.

(ii) **Shoreline use analysis and priorities.** Conduct an analysis to estimate the future demand for shoreline space and potential use conflicts. Characterize current shoreline use patterns and projected trends to ensure appropriate uses consistent with chapter 90.58 RCW and WAC 173-26-201 (2)(d) and 173-26-211(5).

If the jurisdiction includes a designated harbor area or urban waterfront with intensive uses or significant development or redevelopment issues, work with the Washington state department of natural resources and port authorities to ensure consistency with harbor area statutes and regulations, and to address port plans. Identify measures and strategies to encourage appropriate use of these shoreline areas in accordance with the use priorities of chapter 90.58 RCW and WAC 173-26-201 (2)(d) while pursuing opportunities for ecological restoration.

(iii) **Addressing cumulative impacts in developing master programs.** The principle that regulation of development shall achieve no net loss of ecological function requires that master program policies and regulations address the cumulative impacts on shoreline ecological functions that would result from future shoreline development and uses that are reasonably foreseeable from proposed master programs. To comply with the general obligation to

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assure no net loss of shoreline ecological function, the process of developing the policies and regulations of a shoreline master program requires assessment of how proposed policies and regulations cause and avoid such cumulative impacts.

Evaluating and addressing cumulative impacts shall be consistent with the guiding principle in WAC 173-26-186 (8)(d). An appropriate evaluation of cumulative impacts on ecological functions will consider the factors identified in WAC 173-26-186 (8)(d)(i) through (iii) and the effect on the ecological functions of the shoreline that are caused by unregulated activities, development and uses exempt from permitting, effects such as the incremental impact of residential bulkheads, residential piers, or runoff from newly developed properties. Accordingly, particular attention should be paid to policies and regulations that address platting or subdividing of property, laying of utilities, and mapping of streets that establish a pattern for future development that is to be regulated by the master program.

There are practical limits when evaluating impacts that are prospective and sometimes indirect. Local government should rely on the assistance of state agencies and appropriate parties using evaluation, measurement, estimation, or quantification of impact consistent with the guidance of RCW 90.58.100(1) and WAC 173-26-201 (2)(a). Policies and regulations of a master program are not inconsistent with these guidelines for failing to address cumulative impacts where a purported impact is not susceptible to being addressed using an approach consistent with RCW 90.58.100(1).

Complying with the above guidelines is the way that master program policies and regulations should be developed to assure that the commonly occurring and foreseeable cumulative impacts do not cause a net loss of ecological functions of the shoreline. For such commonly occurring and planned development, policies and regulations should be designed without reliance on an individualized cumulative impacts analysis. Local government shall fairly allocate the burden of addressing cumulative impacts.

For development projects and uses that may have unanticipatable or uncommon impacts that cannot be reasonably identified at the time of master program development, the master program policies and regulations should use the permitting or conditional use permitting processes to ensure that all impacts are addressed and that there is no net loss of ecological function of the shoreline after mitigation.

Similarly, local government shall consider and address cumulative impacts on other functions and uses of the shoreline that are consistent with the act. For example, a cumulative impact of allowing development of docks or piers could be interference with navigation on a water body.

(iv) **Shorelines of statewide significance.** If the area contains shorelines of statewide significance, undertake the steps outlined in WAC 173-26-251.

(v) **Public access.** Identify public access needs and opportunities within the jurisdiction and explore actions to enhance shoreline recreation facilities, as described in WAC 173-26-221(4).

(vi) **Enforcement and coordination with other regulatory programs.** Local governments planning under the Growth Management Act shall review their comprehensive plan policies and development regulations to ensure mutual consistency. In order to effectively administer and enforce master program provisions, local governments should also review their current permit review and inspection practices to identify ways to increase efficiency and effectiveness and to ensure consistency.

(vii) **Water quality and quantity.** Identify water quality and quantity issues relevant to master program provisions, including those that affect human health and safety. Shellfish for human consumption are particularly vulnerable to poor water quality and data should be reviewed specific to this water-dependent use. At a minimum, consult with appropriate federal, state, tribal, and local agencies.

(viii) **Vegetation conservation.** Identify how existing shoreline vegetation provides ecological functions and determine methods to ensure protection of those functions. Identify important ecological functions that have been degraded through loss of vegetation. Consider the amount of vegetated shoreline area necessary to achieve ecological objectives. While there may be less vegetation remaining in urbanized areas than in rural areas, the importance of this vegetation, in terms of the ecological functions it provides, is often as great or even greater than in rural areas due to its scarcity. Identify measures to ensure that new development meets vegetation conservation objectives.

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(ix) **Special area planning.** Some shoreline sites or areas require more focused attention than is possible in the overall master program development process due to complex shoreline ecological issues, changing uses, or other unique features or issues. In these circumstances, the local government is encouraged to undertake special area planning. Special area planning also may be used to address: Public access, vegetation conservation, shoreline use compatibility, port development master planning, ecological restoration, or other issues best addressed on a comprehensive basis.

The resultant plans may serve as the basis for facilitating state and local government coordination and permit review. Special area planning shall provide for public and affected Indian tribe participation and compliance with all applicable provisions of the act and WAC 173-26-090 through 173-26-120.

(e) **Establish shoreline policies.** Address all of the elements listed in RCW 90.58.100(2) and all applicable provisions of these guidelines in policies. These policies should be reviewed for mutual consistency with the comprehensive plan policies. If there are shorelines of statewide significance, ensure that the other comprehensive plan policies affecting shoreline jurisdiction are consistent with the objectives of RCW 90.58.020 and 90.58.090(4).

(f) **Establish environment designations.** Establish environment designations and identify permitted uses and development standards for each environment designation.

Based on the inventory in (c) of this subsection and the analysis in (d) of this subsection, assign each shoreline segment an

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environment designation.

Prepare specific environment designation policies and regulations.

Review the environment designations for mutual consistency with comprehensive plan land use designations as indicated in WAC 173-26-211(3).

In determining the boundaries and classifications of environment designations, adhere to the criteria in WAC 173-26-211(5).

(g) **Prepare other shoreline regulations.** Prepare other shoreline regulations based on the policies and the analyses described in this section as necessary to assure consistency with the guidelines of this chapter. The level of detail of inventory information and planning analysis will be a consideration in setting shoreline regulations. As a general rule, the less known about existing resources, the more protective shoreline master program provisions should be to avoid unanticipated impacts to shoreline resources. If there is a question about the extent or condition of an existing ecological resource, then the master program provisions shall be sufficient to reasonably assure that the resource is protected in a manner consistent with the policies of these guidelines. Local governments may accomplish this by including master program requirements for an on-site inventory at the time of project application and performance standard that assure appropriate protection.

(h) **Submit for review and approval.** Local governments are
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encouraged to work with department personnel during preparation of the master program and to submit draft master program provisions to the department for informal advice and guidance prior to formal submittal.

Local governments shall submit the completed checklist, as described in WAC 173-26-201 (3)(a), with their master program amendments proposed for adoption. Master program review and formal adoption procedures are described in Parts I and II of this chapter.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 90.58.060 and 90.58.200. 04-01-117 (Order 03-02), § 173-26-201, filed 12/17/03, effective 1/17/04.]

WAC 173-26-211 Environment designation system. (1)

Applicability. This section applies to the establishment of environment designation boundaries and provisions as described in WAC 173-26-191 (1)(d).

(2) Basic requirements for environment designation classification and provisions.

(a) Master programs shall contain a system to classify shoreline areas into specific environment designations. This classification system shall be based on the existing use pattern, the biological and physical character of the shoreline, and the goals and aspirations of the community as expressed through comprehensive plans as well as the criteria in this section. Each master program's classification system shall be consistent with that described in WAC 173-26-211 (4) and (5) unless the alternative proposed provides equal

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or better implementation of the act.

(b) An up-to-date and accurate map of the shoreline area delineating the environment designations and their boundaries shall be prepared and maintained in the local government office that administers shoreline permits. If it is not feasible to accurately designate individual parcels on a map, the master program text shall include a clear basis for identifying the boundaries, physical features, explicit criteria, or "common" boundary descriptions to accurately define and distinguish the environments on the ground. The master program should also make it clear that in the event of a mapping error, the jurisdiction will rely upon common boundary descriptions and the criteria contained in RCW 90.58.030(2) and chapter 173-22 WAC pertaining to determinations of shorelands, as amended, rather than the incorrect or outdated map.

(c) To facilitate consistency with land use planning, local governments planning under chapter 36.70A RCW are encouraged to illustrate shoreline designations on the comprehensive plan future land use map as described in WAC 365-195-300 (2)(d).

(d) Pursuant to RCW 90.58.040, the map should clearly illustrate what environment designations apply to all shorelines of the state as defined in RCW 90.58.030 (2)(c) within the local government's jurisdiction in a manner consistent with WAC 173-26-211 (4) and (5).

(e) The map and the master program should note that all areas within shoreline jurisdiction that are not mapped and/or designated are automatically assigned a "rural conservancy" designation, or "urban conservancy" designation if within a municipality or urban
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growth area, or the comparable environment designation of the applicable master program until the shoreline can be redesignated through a master program amendment.

(f) The following diagram summarizes the components of the environment designation provisions.



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Diagram summarizing the components of the environment designation provisions.

(This is for illustration purposes only and does not supplement or add to the language in the chapter text.)

(3) Consistency between shoreline environment designations and the local comprehensive plan. As noted in WAC 173-26-191 (1)(e), RCW 90.58.340 requires that policies for lands adjacent to the shorelines be consistent with the Shoreline Management Act,
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implementing rules, and the applicable master program. Conversely, local comprehensive plans constitute the underlying framework within which master program provisions should fit. The Growth Management Act, where applicable, designates shoreline master program policies as an element of the comprehensive plan and requires that all elements be internally consistent. Chapter 36.70A RCW also requires development regulations to be consistent with the comprehensive plan.

The following criteria are intended to assist local governments in evaluating the consistency between master program environment designation provisions and the corresponding comprehensive plan elements and development regulations. In order for shoreline designation provisions, local comprehensive plan land use designations, and development regulations to be internally consistent, all three of the conditions below should be met:

(a) **Provisions not precluding one another.** The comprehensive plan provisions and shoreline environment designation provisions should not preclude one another. To meet this criteria, the provisions of both the comprehensive plan and the master program must be able to be met. Further, when considered together and applied to any one piece of property, the master program use policies and regulations and the local zoning or other use regulations should not conflict in a manner that all viable uses of the property are precluded.

(b) **Use compatibility.** Land use policies and regulations should protect preferred shoreline uses from being impacted by

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incompatible uses. The intent is to prevent water-oriented uses, especially water-dependent uses, from being restricted on shoreline areas because of impacts to nearby nonwater-oriented uses. To be consistent, master programs, comprehensive plans, and development regulations should prevent new uses that are not compatible with preferred uses from locating where they may restrict preferred uses or development.

(c) **Sufficient infrastructure.** Infrastructure and services provided in the comprehensive plan should be sufficient to support allowed shoreline uses. Shoreline uses should not be allowed where the comprehensive plan does not provide sufficient roads, utilities, and other services to support them. Infrastructure plans must also be mutually consistent with shoreline designations. Where they do exist, utility services routed through shoreline areas shall not be a sole justification for more intense development.

(4) **General environment designation provisions.**

(a) **Requirements.** For each environment designation, the shoreline master program shall describe:

(i) **Purpose statement.** The statement of purpose shall describe the shoreline management objectives of the designation in a manner that distinguishes it from other designations.

(ii) **Classification criteria.** Clearly stated criteria shall provide the basis for classifying or reclassifying a specific shoreline area with an environment designation.

(iii) **Management policies.** These policies shall be in sufficient detail to assist in the interpretation of the environment

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designations and, for jurisdictions planning under chapter 36.70A RCW, to evaluate consistency with the local comprehensive plan.

(iv) **Regulations.** Environment-specific regulations shall address the following where necessary to account for different shoreline conditions:

(A) Types of shoreline uses permitted, conditionally permitted, and prohibited;

(B) Building or structure height and bulk limits, setbacks, maximum density or minimum frontage requirements, and site development standards; and

(C) Other topics not covered in general use regulations that are necessary to assure implementation of the purpose of the environment designation.

(b) **The recommended classification system.** The recommended classification system consists of six basic environments:

"High-intensity," "shoreline residential," "urban conservancy," "rural conservancy," "natural," and "aquatic" as described in this section and WAC 173-26-211(5). Local governments should assign all shoreline areas an environment designation consistent with the corresponding designation criteria provided for each environment. In delineating environment designations, local government should assure that existing shoreline ecological functions are protected with the proposed pattern and intensity of development. Such designations should also be consistent with policies for restoration of degraded shorelines.

(c) **Alternative systems.**

(i) Local governments may establish a different designation system or may retain their current environment designations, provided it is consistent with the purposes and policies of this section and WAC 173-26-211(5).

(ii) Local governments may use "parallel environments" where appropriate. Parallel environments divide shorelands into different sections generally running parallel to the shoreline or along a physical feature such as a bluff or railroad right of way. Such environments may be useful, for example, to accommodate resource protection near the shoreline and existing development further from the shoreline. Where parallel environments are used, developments and uses allowed in one environment should not be inconsistent with the achieving the purposes of the other.

(5) **The designations.**

(a) **"Natural" environment.**

(i) **Purpose.** The purpose of the "natural" environment is to protect those shoreline areas that are relatively free of human influence or that include intact or minimally degraded shoreline functions intolerant of human use. These systems require that only very low intensity uses be allowed in order to maintain the ecological functions and ecosystem-wide processes. Consistent with the policies of the designation, local government should include planning for restoration of degraded shorelines within this environment.

(ii) **Management policies.**

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(A) Any use that would substantially degrade the ecological functions or natural character of the shoreline area should not be allowed.

(B) The following new uses should not be allowed in the "natural" environment:

- ✎ Commercial uses.
- ✎ Industrial uses.
- ✎ Nonwater-oriented recreation.
- ✎ Roads, utility corridors, and parking areas that can be located outside of "natural" designated shorelines.

(C) Single-family residential development may be allowed as a conditional use within the "natural" environment if the density and intensity of such use is limited as necessary to protect ecological functions and be consistent with the purpose of the environment.

(D) Commercial forestry may be allowed as a conditional use in the "natural" environment provided it meets the conditions of the State Forest Practices Act and its implementing rules and is conducted in a manner consistent with the purpose of this environment designation.

(E) Agricultural uses of a very low intensity nature may be consistent with the natural environment when such use is subject to appropriate limitations or conditions to assure that the use does not expand or alter practices in a manner inconsistent with the purpose of the designation.

(F) Scientific, historical, cultural, educational research uses, and low-intensity water-oriented recreational access uses may

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be allowed provided that no significant ecological impact on the area will result.

(G) New development or significant vegetation removal that would reduce the capability of vegetation to perform normal ecological functions should not be allowed. Do not allow the subdivision of property in a configuration that, to achieve its intended purpose, will require significant vegetation removal or shoreline modification that adversely impacts ecological functions. That is, each new parcel must be able to support its intended development without significant ecological impacts to the shoreline ecological functions.

(iii) **Designation criteria.** A "natural" environment designation should be assigned to shoreline areas if any of the following characteristics apply:

(A) The shoreline is ecologically intact and therefore currently performing an important, irreplaceable function or ecosystem-wide process that would be damaged by human activity;

(B) The shoreline is considered to represent ecosystems and geologic types that are of particular scientific and educational interest; or

(C) The shoreline is unable to support new development or uses without significant adverse impacts to ecological functions or risk to human safety.

Such shoreline areas include largely undisturbed portions of shoreline areas such as wetlands, estuaries, unstable bluffs, coastal dunes, spits, and ecologically intact shoreline habitats.

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Shorelines inside or outside urban growth areas may be designated as "natural."

Ecologically intact shorelines, as used here, means those shoreline areas that retain the majority of their natural shoreline functions, as evidenced by the shoreline configuration and the presence of native vegetation. Generally, but not necessarily, ecologically intact shorelines are free of structural shoreline modifications, structures, and intensive human uses. In forested areas, they generally include native vegetation with diverse plant communities, multiple canopy layers, and the presence of large woody debris available for recruitment to adjacent water bodies. Recognizing that there is a continuum of ecological conditions ranging from near natural conditions to totally degraded and contaminated sites, this term is intended to delineate those shoreline areas that provide valuable functions for the larger aquatic and terrestrial environments which could be lost or significantly reduced by human development. Whether or not a shoreline is ecologically intact is determined on a case-by-case basis.

The term "ecologically intact shorelines" applies to all shoreline areas meeting the above criteria ranging from larger reaches that may include multiple properties to small areas located within a single property.

Areas with significant existing agriculture lands should not be included in the "natural" designation, except where the existing agricultural operations involve very low intensity uses where there

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is no significant impact on natural ecological functions, and where the intensity or impacts associated with such agriculture activities is unlikely to expand in a manner inconsistent with the "natural" designation.

(b) **"Rural conservancy" environment.**

(i) **Purpose.** The purpose of the "rural conservancy" environment is to protect ecological functions, conserve existing 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 of uses that are appropriate in a "rural conservancy" environment include low-impact outdoor recreation uses, timber harvesting on a sustained-yield basis, agricultural uses, aquaculture, low-intensity residential development and other natural resource-based low-intensity uses.

(ii) **Management policies.**

(A) Uses in the "rural conservancy" environment should be limited to those which sustain the shoreline area's physical and biological resources and uses of a nonpermanent nature that do not substantially degrade ecological functions or the rural or natural character of the shoreline area.

Except as noted, commercial and industrial uses should not be allowed. Agriculture, commercial forestry, and aquaculture when consistent with provisions of this chapter may be allowed.

Low-intensity, water-oriented commercial and industrial uses may be permitted in the limited instances where those uses have located in

the past or at unique sites in rural communities that possess shoreline conditions and services to support the ~~use~~ development.

Water-dependent and water-enjoyment recreation facilities that do not deplete the resource over time, such as boating facilities, angling, hunting, wildlife viewing trails, and swimming beaches, are preferred uses, provided significant adverse impacts to the shoreline are mitigated.

Mining is a unique use as a result of its inherent linkage to geology. Therefore, mining and related activities may be an appropriate use within the rural conservancy environment when conducted in a manner consistent with the environment policies and the provisions of WAC 173-26-241 (3)(h) and when located consistent with mineral resource lands designation criteria pursuant to RCW 36.70A.170 and WAC 365-190-070.

(B) Developments and uses that would substantially degrade or permanently deplete the biological resources of the area should not be allowed.

(C) Construction of new structural shoreline stabilization and flood control works should only be allowed where there is a documented need to protect an existing structure or ecological functions and mitigation is applied, consistent with WAC 173-26-231. New development should be designed and located to preclude the need for such work.

(D) Residential development standards shall ensure no net loss of shoreline ecological functions and should preserve the existing character of the shoreline consistent with the purpose of the

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environment. As a general matter, meeting this provision will require density, lot coverage, vegetation conservation and other provisions.

Scientific studies support density or lot coverage limitation standards that assure that development will be limited to a maximum of ten percent total impervious surface area within the lot or parcel, will maintain the existing hydrologic character of the shoreline. However, an alternative standard developed based on scientific information that meets the provisions of this chapter and accomplishes the purpose of the environment designation may be used.

Master programs may allow greater lot coverage to allow development of lots legally created prior to the adoption of a master program prepared under these guidelines. In these instances, master programs shall include measures to assure protection of ecological functions to the extent feasible such as requiring that lot coverage is minimized and vegetation is conserved.

(E) New shoreline stabilization, flood control measures, vegetation removal, and other shoreline modifications should be designed and managed consistent with these guidelines to ensure that the natural shoreline functions are protected. Such shoreline modification should not be inconsistent with planning provisions for restoration of shoreline ecological functions.

(iii) **Designation criteria.** Assign a "rural conservancy" environment designation to shoreline areas outside incorporated municipalities and outside urban growth areas, as defined by RCW 36.70A.110, if any of the following characteristics apply:

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(A) The shoreline is currently supporting lesser-intensity resource-based uses, such as agriculture, forestry, or recreational uses, or is designated agricultural or forest lands pursuant to RCW 36.70A.170;

(B) The shoreline is currently accommodating residential uses outside urban growth areas and incorporated cities or towns;

(C) The shoreline is supporting human uses but subject to environmental limitations, such as properties that include or are adjacent to steep banks, feeder bluffs, or flood plains or other flood-prone areas;

(D) The shoreline is of high recreational value or with unique historic or cultural resources; or

(E) The shoreline has low-intensity water-dependent uses.

Areas designated in a local comprehensive plan as "rural areas of more intense development," as provided for in chapter 36.70A RCW, may be designated an alternate shoreline environment, provided it is consistent with the objectives of the Growth Management Act and this chapter. "Master planned resorts" as described in RCW 36.70A.360 may be designated an alternate shoreline environment, provided the applicable master program provisions do not allow significant ecological impacts.

Lands that may otherwise qualify for designation as rural conservancy and which are designated as "mineral resource lands" pursuant to RCW 36.70A.170 and WAC 365-190-070 may be assigned a designation within the "rural conservancy" environment that allows mining and associated uses in addition to other uses consistent with WAC (5/11/10 2:44 PM) [51]

the rural conservancy environment.

(c) **"Aquatic" environment.**

(i) **Purpose.** The purpose of the "aquatic" environment is to protect, restore, and manage the unique characteristics and resources of the areas waterward of the ordinary high-water mark.

(ii) **Management policies.**

(A) Allow new over-water structures only for water-dependent uses, public access, or ecological restoration.

(B) The size of new over-water structures should be limited to the minimum necessary to support the structure's intended use.

(C) In order to reduce the impacts of shoreline development and increase effective use of water resources, multiple use of over-water facilities should be encouraged.

(D) All developments and uses on navigable waters or their beds should be located and designed to minimize interference with surface navigation, to consider impacts to public views, and to allow for the safe, unobstructed passage of fish and wildlife, particularly those species dependent on migration.

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(E) Local governments should classify appropriate areas for commercial geoduck aquaculture when and where water quality and site conditions are suitable. This policy does not preclude reserving appropriate areas for protecting and restoring ecological functions to control pollution and prevent damage to the natural environment.

(E) Uses that adversely impact the ecological functions of
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critical saltwater and freshwater habitats should not be allowed except where necessary to achieve the objectives of RCW 90.58.020, and then only when their impacts are mitigated according to the sequence described in WAC 173-26-201 (2)(e) as necessary to assure no net loss of ecological functions.

(F) Shoreline uses and modifications should be designed and managed to prevent degradation of water quality and alteration of natural hydrographic conditions.

(iii) **Designation criteria.** Assign an "aquatic" environment designation to lands waterward of the ordinary high-water mark.

Local governments may designate submerged and intertidal lands with shoreland designations (e.g., "high-intensity" or "rural conservancy") if the management policies and objectives for aquatic areas are met. In this case, the designation system used must provide regulations for managing submerged and intertidal lands that are clear and consistent with the "aquatic" environment management policies in this chapter. Additionally, local governments may assign an "aquatic" environment designation to wetlands.

(d) **"High-intensity" environment.**

(i) **Purpose.** The purpose of the "high-intensity" environment is to provide for high-intensity water-oriented commercial, transportation, and industrial uses while protecting existing ecological functions and restoring ecological functions in areas that have been previously degraded.

(ii) **Management policies.**

(A) In regulating uses in the "high-intensity" environment,

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first priority should be given to water-dependent uses. Second priority should be given to water-related and water-enjoyment uses. Nonwater-oriented uses should not be allowed except as part of mixed use developments. Nonwater-oriented uses may also be allowed in limited situations where they do not conflict with or limit opportunities for water-oriented uses or on sites where there is no direct access to the shoreline. Such specific situations should be identified in shoreline use analysis or special area planning, as described in WAC 173-26-200 (3)(d).

If an analysis of water-dependent use needs as described in WAC 173-26-201 (3)(d)(ii) demonstrates the needs of existing and envisioned water-dependent uses for the planning period are met, then provisions allowing for a mix of water-dependent and nonwater-dependent uses may be established. If those shoreline areas also provide ecological functions, apply standards to assure no net loss of those functions.

(B) Full utilization of existing urban areas should be achieved before further expansion of intensive development is allowed. Reasonable long-range projections of regional economic need should guide the amount of shoreline designated "high-intensity." However, consideration should be given to the potential for displacement of nonwater-oriented uses with water-oriented uses when analyzing full utilization of urban waterfronts and before considering expansion of such areas.

(C) Policies and regulations shall assure no net loss of shoreline ecological functions as a result of new development.

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Where applicable, new development shall include environmental cleanup and restoration of the shoreline to comply in accordance with any relevant state and federal law.

(D) Where feasible, visual and physical public access should be required as provided for in WAC 173-26-221 (4)(d).

(E) Aesthetic objectives should be implemented by means such as sign control regulations, appropriate development siting, screening and architectural standards, and maintenance of natural vegetative buffers.

(iii) **Designation criteria.** Assign a "high-intensity" environment designation to shoreline areas within incorporated municipalities, urban growth areas, and industrial or commercial "rural areas of more intense development," as described by RCW 36.70A.070, if they currently support high-intensity uses related to commerce, transportation or navigation; or are suitable and planned for high-intensity water-oriented uses.

(e) **"Urban conservancy" environment.**

(i) **Purpose.** The purpose of the "urban conservancy" environment is to protect and restore ecological functions of open space, flood plain and other sensitive lands where they exist in urban and developed settings, while allowing a variety of compatible uses.

(ii) **Management policies.**

(A) Uses that preserve the natural character of the area or promote preservation of open space, flood plain or sensitive lands either directly or over the long term should be the primary allowed uses. Uses that result in restoration of ecological functions

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should be allowed if the use is otherwise compatible with the purpose of the environment and the setting.

(B) Standards should be established for shoreline stabilization measures, vegetation conservation, water quality, and shoreline modifications within the "urban conservancy" designation. These standards shall ensure that new development does not result in a net loss of shoreline ecological functions or further degrade other shoreline values.

(C) Public access and public recreation objectives should be implemented whenever feasible and significant ecological impacts can be mitigated.

(D) Water-oriented uses should be given priority over nonwater-oriented uses. For shoreline areas adjacent to commercially navigable waters, water-dependent uses should be given highest priority.

(E) Mining is a unique use as a result of its inherent linkage to geology. Therefore, mining and related activities may be an appropriate use within the urban conservancy environment when conducted in a manner consistent with the environment policies and the provisions of WAC 173-26-240 (3)(h) and when located consistent with mineral resource lands designation criteria pursuant to RCW 36.70A.170 and WAC 365-190-070.

(iii) **Designation criteria.** Assign an "urban conservancy" environment designation to shoreline areas appropriate and planned for development that is compatible with maintaining or restoring of the ecological functions of the area, that are not generally suitable

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for water-dependent uses and that lie in incorporated municipalities, urban growth areas, or commercial or industrial "rural areas of more intense development" if any of the following characteristics apply:

(A) They are suitable for water-related or water-enjoyment uses;

(B) They are open space, flood plain or other sensitive areas that should not be more intensively developed;

(C) They have potential for ecological restoration;

(D) They retain important ecological functions, even though partially developed; or

(E) They have the potential for development that is compatible with ecological restoration.

Lands that may otherwise qualify for designation as urban conservancy and which are designated as "mineral resource lands" pursuant to RCW 36.70A.170 and WAC 365-190-070 may be assigned a designation within the "urban conservancy" environment that allows mining and associated uses in addition to other uses consistent with the urban conservancy environment.

(f) **"Shoreline residential" environment.**

(i) **Purpose.** The purpose of the "shoreline residential" environment is to accommodate residential development and appurtenant structures that are consistent with this chapter. An additional purpose is to provide appropriate public access and recreational uses.

(ii) **Management policies.**

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(A) Standards for density or minimum frontage width, setbacks, lot coverage limitations, buffers, shoreline stabilization, vegetation conservation, critical area protection, and water quality shall be set to assure no net loss of shoreline ecological functions, taking into account the environmental limitations and sensitivity of the shoreline area, the level of infrastructure and services available, and other comprehensive planning considerations.

Local governments may establish two or more different "shoreline residential" environments to accommodate different shoreline densities or conditions, provided both environments adhere to the provisions in this chapter.

(B) Multifamily and multilot residential and recreational developments should provide public access and joint use for community recreational facilities.

(C) Access, utilities, and public services should be available and adequate to serve existing needs and/or planned future development.

(D) Commercial development should be limited to water-oriented uses.

(iii) **Designation criteria.** Assign a "shoreline residential" environment designation to shoreline areas inside urban growth areas, as defined in RCW 36.70A.110, incorporated municipalities, "rural areas of more intense development," or "master planned resorts," as described in RCW 36.70A.360, if they are predominantly single-family or multifamily residential development or are planned and platted for residential development.

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[Statutory Authority: RCW 90.58.060 and 90.58.200. 04-01-117
(Order 03-02), § 173-26-211, filed 12/17/03, effective 1/17/04.]

WAC 173-26-221 General master program provisions. The provisions of this section shall be applied either generally to all shoreline areas or to shoreline areas that meet the specified criteria of the provision without regard to environment designation. These provisions address certain elements as required by RCW 90.58.100(2) and implement the principles as established in WAC 173-26-186.

(1) **Archaeological and historic resources.**

(a) **Applicability.** The following provisions apply to archaeological and historic resources that are either recorded at the state historic preservation office and/or by local jurisdictions or have been inadvertently uncovered. Archaeological sites located both in and outside shoreline jurisdiction are subject to chapter 27.44 RCW (Indian graves and records) and chapter 27.53 RCW (Archaeological sites and records) and development or uses that may impact such sites shall comply with chapter 25-48 WAC as well as the provisions of this chapter.

(b) **Principles.** Due to the limited and irreplaceable nature of the resource(s), prevent the destruction of or damage to any site having historic, cultural, scientific, or educational value as identified by the appropriate authorities, including affected Indian tribes, and the office of archaeology and historic preservation.

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(c) **Standards.** Local shoreline master programs shall include policies and regulations to protect historic, archaeological, and cultural features and qualities of shorelines and implement the following standards. A local government may reference historic inventories or regulations. Contact the office of archaeology and historic preservation and affected Indian tribes for additional information.

(i) Require that developers and property owners immediately stop work and notify the local government, the office of archaeology and historic preservation and affected Indian tribes if archaeological resources are uncovered during excavation.

(ii) Require that permits issued in areas documented to contain archaeological resources require a site inspection or evaluation by a professional archaeologist in coordination with affected Indian tribes.

(2) **Critical areas.**

(a) **Applicability.** Pursuant to the provisions of RCW 90.58.090(4) as amended by chapter 321, Laws of 2003 (ESHB 1933), shoreline master programs must provide for management of critical areas designated as such pursuant to RCW 36.70A.170 (1)(d) and required to be protected pursuant to RCW 36.70A.060(2) that are located within the shorelines of the state with policies and regulations that:

(i) Are consistent with the specific provisions of this subsection (2) critical areas and subsection (3) of this section flood hazard reduction, and these guidelines; and

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(ii) Provide a level of protection to critical areas within the shoreline area that is at least equal to that provided by the local government's critical area regulations adopted pursuant to the Growth Management Act for comparable areas other than shorelines.

When approved by ecology pursuant to RCW 90.58.090(4), a local government's SMP becomes regulations for protection of critical areas in the shorelines of the state in the jurisdiction of the adopting local government except as noted in RCW 36.70A.480 (3)(b) and (6).

The provisions of this section and subsection (3) of this section, flood hazard reduction, shall be applied to critical areas within the shorelines of the state. RCW 36.70A.030 defines critical areas as:

"Critical areas" include the following areas and ecosystems:

(a) Wetlands; (b) areas with a critical recharging effect on aquifers used for potable waters; (c) fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas; (d) frequently flooded areas; and (e) geologically hazardous areas."

The provisions of WAC 365-190-080, to the extent standards for certain types of critical areas are not provided by this section and subsection (3) of this section flood hazard reduction, and to the extent consistent with these guidelines are also applicable to and provide further definition of critical area categories and management policies.

As provided in RCW 90.58.030 (2)(f)(ii) and 36.70A.480, as amended by chapter 321, Laws of 2003 (ESHB 1933), any city or county

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may also include in its master program land necessary for buffers for critical areas, as defined in chapter 36.70A RCW, that occur within shorelines of the state, provided that forest practices regulated under chapter 76.09 RCW, except conversions to nonforest land use, on lands subject to the provision of (f)(ii) of this subsection are not subject to additional regulations. If a local government does not include land necessary for buffers for critical areas that occur within shorelines of the state, as authorized above, then the local jurisdiction shall continue to regulate those critical areas and required buffers pursuant to RCW 36.70A.060(2).

(b) **Principles.** Local master programs, when addressing critical areas, shall implement the following principles:

(i) Shoreline master programs shall adhere to the standards established in the following sections, unless it is demonstrated through scientific and technical information as provided in RCW 90.58.100(1) and as described in WAC 173-26-201 (2)(a) that an alternative approach provides better resource protection.

(ii) In addressing issues related to critical areas, use scientific and technical information, as described in WAC 173-26-201 (2)(a). The role of ecology in reviewing master program provisions for critical areas in shorelines of the state will be based on the Shoreline Management Act and these guidelines and a comparison with requirements in currently adopted critical area ordinances for comparable areas to ensure that the provisions are at least equal to the level of protection provided by the currently adopted critical area ordinance.

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(iii) In protecting and restoring critical areas within shoreline jurisdiction, integrate the full spectrum of planning and regulatory measures, including the comprehensive plan, interlocal watershed plans, local development regulations, and state, tribal, and federal programs.

(iv) The planning objectives of shoreline management provisions for critical areas shall be the protection of existing ecological functions and ecosystem-wide processes and restoration of degraded ecological functions and ecosystem-wide processes. The regulatory provisions for critical areas shall protect existing ecological functions and ecosystem-wide processes.

(v) Promote human uses and values that are compatible with the other objectives of this section, such as public access and aesthetic values, provided they do not significantly adversely impact ecological functions.

(c) **Standards.** When preparing master program provisions for critical areas, local governments should implement the following standards and the provisions of WAC 365-190-080 and use scientific and technical information, as provided for in WAC 173-26-201 (2)(a).

In reviewing the critical areas segment of a master program, the department of ecology shall first assure consistency with the standards of this section Critical areas (WAC 173-26-221(2)), and with the Flood hazard reduction section (WAC 173-26-221(3)), and shall then assure that the master program also provides protection of comparable critical areas that is at least equal to the protection provided by the local governments adopted and valid critical area WAC (5/11/10 2:44 PM) [63]

regulations in effect at the time of submittal of the SMP.

In conducting the review for equivalency with local regulations, the department shall not further evaluate the adequacy of the local critical area regulations. Incorporation of the adopted and valid critical area regulations in effect at the time of submittal by reference as provided in WAC 173-26-191 (2)(b) shall be deemed to meet the requirement for equivalency. However, a finding of equivalency does not constitute a finding of compliance with the requirements of this section and subsection (3) of this section flood hazard reduction, nor with the guidelines overall.

Note that provisions for frequently flooded areas are included in WAC 173-26-221(3).

(i) **Wetlands.**

(A) **Wetland use regulations.** Local governments should consult the department's technical guidance documents on wetlands.

Regulations shall address the following uses to achieve, at a minimum, no net loss of wetland area and functions, including lost time when the wetland does not perform the function:

 The removal, excavation, grading, or dredging of soil, sand, gravel, minerals, organic matter, or material of any kind;

 The dumping, discharging, or filling with any material, including discharges of storm water and domestic, commercial, or industrial wastewater;

 The draining, flooding, or disturbing of the water level, duration of inundation, or water table;

 The driving of pilings;

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- ✎ The placing of obstructions;
 - ✎ The construction, reconstruction, demolition, or expansion of any structure;
 - ✎ Significant vegetation removal, provided that these activities are not part of a forest practice governed under chapter 76.09 RCW and its rules;
 - ✎ Other uses or development that results in a significant ecological impact to the physical, chemical, or biological characteristics of wetlands; or
 - ✎ Activities reducing the functions of buffers described in (c)(i)(D) of this subsection.

(B) **Wetland rating or categorization.** Wetlands shall be categorized based on the rarity, irreplaceability, or sensitivity to disturbance of a wetland and the functions the wetland provides. Local governments should either use the Washington state wetland rating system, Eastern or Western Washington version as appropriate, or they should develop their own, regionally specific, scientifically based method for categorizing wetlands. Wetlands should be categorized to reflect differences in wetland quality and function in order to tailor protection standards appropriately. A wetland categorization method is not a substitute for a function assessment method, where detailed information on wetland functions is needed.

(C) **Alterations to wetlands.** Master program provisions addressing alterations to wetlands shall be consistent with the policy of no net loss of wetland area and functions, wetland rating, WAC (5/11/10 2:44 PM) [65]

scientific and technical information, and the mitigation priority sequence defined in WAC 173-26-201 (2)(e).

(D) **Buffers.** Master programs shall contain requirements for buffer zones around wetlands. Buffer requirements shall be adequate to ensure that wetland functions are protected and maintained in the long term. Requirements for buffer zone widths and management shall take into account the ecological functions of the wetland, the characteristics and setting of the buffer, the potential impacts associated with the adjacent land use, and other relevant factors.

(E) **Mitigation.** Master programs shall contain wetland mitigation requirements that are consistent with WAC 173-26-201 (2)(e) and which are based on the wetland rating.

(F) **Compensatory mitigation.** Compensatory mitigation shall be allowed only after mitigation sequencing is applied and higher priority means of mitigation are determined to be infeasible.

Requirements for compensatory mitigation must include provisions for:

(I) Mitigation replacement ratios or a similar method of addressing the following:

- ✎ The risk of failure of the compensatory mitigation action;
- ✎ The length of time it will take the compensatory mitigation action to adequately replace the impacted wetland functions and values;

- ✎ The gain or loss of the type, quality, and quantity of the ecological functions of the compensation wetland as compared with the impacted wetland.

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(II) Establishment of performance standards for evaluating the success of compensatory mitigation actions;

(III) Establishment of long-term monitoring and reporting procedures to determine if performance standards are met; and

(IV) Establishment of long-term protection and management of compensatory mitigation sites.

Credits from a certified mitigation bank may be used to compensate for unavoidable impacts.

(ii) **Geologically hazardous areas.** Development in designated geologically hazardous areas shall be regulated in accordance with the following:

(A) Consult minimum guidelines for geologically hazardous areas, WAC 365-190-080(4).

(B) Do not allow new development or the creation of new lots that would cause foreseeable risk from geological conditions to people or improvements during the life of the development.

(C) Do not allow new development that would require structural shoreline stabilization over the life of the development. Exceptions may be made for the limited instances where stabilization is necessary to protect allowed uses where no alternative locations are available and no net loss of ecological functions will result. The stabilization measures shall conform to WAC 173-26-231.

(D) Where no alternatives, including relocation or reconstruction of existing structures, are found to be feasible, and less expensive than the proposed stabilization measure, stabilization structures or measures to protect existing primary

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residential structures may be allowed in strict conformance with WAC 173-26-231 requirements and then only if no net loss of ecological functions will result.

(iii) **Critical saltwater habitats.**

(A) **Applicability.** Critical saltwater habitats include all kelp beds, eelgrass beds, spawning and holding areas for forage fish, such as herring, smelt and sandlance; subsistence, commercial and recreational shellfish beds; mudflats, intertidal habitats with vascular plants, and areas with which priority species have a primary association.

Critical saltwater habitats require a higher level of protection due to the important ecological functions they provide. Ecological functions of marine shorelands can affect the viability of critical saltwater habitats. Therefore, effective protection and restoration of critical saltwater habitats should integrate management of shorelands as well as submerged areas.

(B) **Principles.** Master programs shall include policies and regulations to protect critical saltwater habitats and should implement planning policies and programs to restore such habitats. Planning for critical saltwater habitats shall incorporate the participation of state resource agencies to assure consistency with other legislatively created programs in addition to local and regional government entities with an interest such as port districts. Affected Indian tribes shall also be consulted. Local governments should review relevant comprehensive management plan policies and development regulations for shorelands and adjacent lands to achieve

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consistency as directed in RCW 90.58.340. Local governments should base management planning on information provided by state resource agencies and affected Indian tribes unless they demonstrate that they possess more accurate and reliable information.

The management planning should include an evaluation of current data and trends regarding the following:

- ✎ Available inventory and collection of necessary data regarding physical characteristics of the habitat, including upland conditions, and any information on species population trends;

- ✎ Terrestrial and aquatic vegetation;

- ✎ The level of human activity in such areas, including the presence of roads and level of recreational types (passive or active recreation may be appropriate for certain areas and habitats);

- ✎ Restoration potential;

- ✎ Tributaries and small streams flowing into marine waters;

- ✎ Dock and bulkhead construction, including an inventory of bulkheads serving no protective purpose;

- ✎ Conditions and ecological functions in the near-shore area;

- ✎ Uses surrounding the critical saltwater habitat areas that may negatively impact those areas, including permanent or occasional upland, beach, or over-water uses; and

- ✎ An analysis of what data gaps exist and a strategy for gaining this information.

The management planning should address the following, where applicable:

- ✎ Protecting a system of fish and wildlife habitats with

connections between larger habitat blocks and open spaces and restoring such habitats and connections where they are degraded;

- ✎ Protecting existing and restoring degraded riparian and estuarine ecosystems, especially salt marsh habitats;

- ✎ Establishing adequate buffer zones around these areas to separate incompatible uses from the habitat areas;

- ✎ Protecting existing and restoring degraded near-shore habitat;

- ✎ Protecting existing and restoring degraded or lost salmonid habitat;

- ✎ Protecting existing and restoring degraded upland ecological functions important to critical saltwater habitats, including riparian vegetation;

- ✎ Improving water quality;

- ✎ Protecting existing and restoring degraded sediment inflow and transport regimens; and

- ✎ Correcting activities that cause excessive sediment input where human activity has led to mass wasting.

Local governments, in conjunction with state resource agencies and affected Indian tribes, should classify critical saltwater habitats and protect and restore seasonal ranges and habitat elements with which federal-listed and state-listed endangered, threatened, and priority species have a primary association and which, if altered, may reduce the likelihood that a species will maintain its population and reproduce over the long term.

Local governments, in conjunction with state resource agencies
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and affected Indian tribes, should determine which habitats and species are of local importance.

All public and private tidelands or bedlands suitable for shellfish harvest shall be classified as critical saltwater habitats areas. Local governments should consider both commercial and recreational shellfish areas. Local governments should review the Washington department of health classification of commercial and recreational shellfish growing areas to determine the existing condition of these areas. Further consideration should be given to the vulnerability of these areas to contamination or potential for recovery. Shellfish protection districts established pursuant to chapter 90.72 RCW shall be included in the classification of critical saltwater habitats~~shellfish areas~~. Local governments shall classify kelp and eelgrass beds, forage fish spawning areas, and priority species habitat identified by the department of natural resources' aquatic resources division, the department of fish and wildlife, the department, and affected Indian tribes as critical saltwater habitats.

Comprehensive saltwater habitat management planning should identify methods for monitoring conditions and adapting management practices to new information.

(C) **Standards.** Docks, bulkheads, bridges, fill, floats, jetties, utility crossings, and other human-made structures shall not intrude into or over critical saltwater habitats except when all of the conditions below are met:

✍ The public's need for such an action or structure is clearly
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demonstrated and the proposal is consistent with protection of the public trust, as embodied in RCW 90.58.020;

✎ Avoidance of impacts to critical saltwater habitats by an alternative alignment or location is not feasible or would result in unreasonable and disproportionate cost to accomplish the same general purpose;

✎ The project including any required mitigation, will result in no net loss of ecological functions associated with critical saltwater habitat.

✎ The project is consistent with the state's interest in resource protection and species recovery.

Private, noncommercial docks for individual residential or community use may be authorized provided that:

✎ Avoidance of impacts to critical saltwater habitats by an alternative alignment or location is not feasible;

✎ The project including any required mitigation, will result in no net loss of ecological functions associated with critical saltwater habitat.

Until an inventory of critical saltwater habitat has been done, shoreline master programs shall condition all over-water and near-shore developments in marine and estuarine waters with the requirement for an inventory of the site and adjacent beach sections to assess the presence of critical saltwater habitats and functions. The methods and extent of the inventory shall be consistent with accepted research methodology. At a minimum, local governments should consult with department technical assistance materials for WAC (5/11/10 2:44 PM) [72]

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guidance.

(iv) **Critical freshwater habitats.**

(A) **Applicability.** The following applies to master program provisions affecting critical freshwater habitats, including those portions of streams, rivers, wetlands, and lakes, their associated channel migration zones, and flood plains designated as such.

(B) **Principles.** Many ecological functions of river and stream corridors depend both on continuity and connectivity along the length of the shoreline and on the conditions of the surrounding lands on either side of the river channel. Environmental degradation caused by development such as improper storm water sewer or industrial outfalls, unmanaged clearing and grading, or runoff from buildings and parking lots within the watershed, can degrade ecological functions downstream. Likewise, gradual destruction or loss of the vegetation, alteration of runoff quality and quantity along the corridor resulting from incremental flood plain development can raise water temperatures and alter hydrographic conditions and degrade other ecological functions, thereby making the corridor inhospitable for priority species and susceptible to catastrophic flooding, droughts, landslides and channel changes. These conditions also threaten human health, safety, and property. Long stretches of river and stream shorelines have been significantly altered or degraded in this manner. Therefore, effective management of river and stream corridors depends on:

(I) Planning for protection, and restoration where appropriate, along the entire length of the corridor from river headwaters to the
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mouth; and

(II) Regulating uses and development within the stream channel, associated channel migration zone, wetlands, and the flood plain, to the extent such areas are in the shoreline jurisdictional area, as necessary to assure no net loss of ecological functions associated with the river or stream corridors, including the associated hyporheic zone, results from new development.

As part of a comprehensive approach to management of critical freshwater habitat and other river and stream values, local governments should integrate master program provisions, including those for shoreline stabilization, fill, vegetation conservation, water quality, flood hazard reduction, and specific uses, to protect human health and safety and to protect and restore the corridor's ecological functions and ecosystem-wide processes.

Applicable master programs shall contain provisions to protect hydrologic connections between water bodies, water courses, and associated wetlands. Restoration planning should include incentives and other means to restore water connections that have been impeded by previous development.

Master program provisions for river and stream corridors should, where appropriate, be based on the information from comprehensive watershed management planning where available.

(C) **Standards.** Master programs shall implement the following standards within shoreline jurisdiction:

(I) Provide for the protection of ecological functions associated with critical freshwater habitat as necessary to assure

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no net loss.

(II) Where appropriate, integrate protection of critical freshwater habitat, protection with flood hazard reduction and other river and stream management provisions.

(III) Include provisions that facilitate authorization of appropriate restoration projects.

(IV) Provide for the implementation of the principles identified in (c)(iv)(B) of this subsection.

(3) **Flood hazard reduction.**

(a) **Applicability.** The following provisions apply to actions taken to reduce flood damage or hazard and to uses, development, and shoreline modifications that may increase flood hazards. Flood hazard reduction measures may consist of nonstructural measures, such as setbacks, land use controls, wetland restoration, dike removal, use relocation, biotechnical measures, and storm water management programs, and of structural measures, such as dikes, levees, revetments, floodwalls, channel realignment, and elevation of structures consistent with the National Flood Insurance Program. Additional relevant critical area provisions are in WAC 173-26-221(2).

(b) **Principles.** Flooding of rivers, streams, and other shorelines is a natural process that is affected by factors and land uses occurring throughout the watershed. Past land use practices have disrupted hydrological processes and increased the rate and volume of runoff, thereby exacerbating flood hazards and reducing ecological functions. Flood hazard reduction measures are most
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effective when integrated into comprehensive strategies that recognize the natural hydrogeological and biological processes of water bodies. Over the long term, the most effective means of flood hazard reduction is to prevent or remove development in flood-prone areas, to manage storm water within the flood plain, and to maintain or restore river and stream system's natural hydrological and geomorphological processes.

Structural flood hazard reduction measures, such as diking, even if effective in reducing inundation in a portion of the watershed, can intensify flooding elsewhere. Moreover, structural flood hazard reduction measures can damage ecological functions crucial to fish and wildlife species, bank stability, and water quality. Therefore, structural flood hazard reduction measures shall be avoided whenever possible. When necessary, they shall be accomplished in a manner that assures no net loss of ecological functions and ecosystem-wide processes.

The dynamic physical processes of rivers, including the movement of water, sediment and wood, cause the river channel in some areas to move laterally, or "migrate," over time. This is a natural process in response to gravity and topography and allows the river to release energy and distribute its sediment load. The area within which a river channel is likely to move over a period of time is referred to as the channel migration zone (CMZ) or the meander belt. Scientific examination as well as experience has demonstrated that interference with this natural process often has unintended consequences for human users of the river and its valley such as

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increased or changed flood, sedimentation and erosion patterns. It also has adverse effects on fish and wildlife through loss of critical habitat for river and riparian dependent species. Failing to recognize the process often leads to damage to, or loss of, structures and threats to life safety.

Applicable shoreline master programs should include provisions to limit development and shoreline modifications that would result in interference with the process of channel migration that may cause significant adverse impacts to property or public improvements and/or result in a net loss of ecological functions associated with the rivers and streams. (See also (c) of this subsection.)

The channel migration zone should be established to identify those areas with a high probability of being subject to channel movement based on the historic record, geologic character and evidence of past migration. It should also be recognized that past action is not a perfect predictor of the future and that human and natural changes may alter migration patterns. Consideration should be given to such changes that may have occurred and their effect on future migration patterns.

For management purposes, the extent of likely migration along a stream reach can be identified using evidence of active stream channel movement over the past one hundred years. Evidence of active movement can be provided from historic and current aerial photos and maps and may require field analysis of specific channel and valley bottom characteristics in some cases. A time frame of one hundred years was chosen because aerial photos, maps and field evidence can

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be used to evaluate movement in this time frame.

In some cases, river channels are prevented from normal or historic migration by human-made structures or other shoreline modifications. The definition of channel migration zone indicates that in defining the extent of a CMZ, local governments should take into account the river's characteristics and its surroundings. Unless otherwise demonstrated through scientific and technical information, the following characteristics should be considered when establishing the extent of the CMZ for management purposes:

✎ Within incorporated municipalities and urban growth areas, areas separated from the active river channel by legally existing artificial channel constraints that limit channel movement should not be considered within the channel migration zone.

✎ All areas separated from the active channel by a legally existing artificial structure(s) that is likely to restrain channel migration, including transportation facilities, built above or constructed to remain intact through the one hundred-year flood, should not be considered to be in the channel migration zone.

✎ In areas outside incorporated municipalities and urban growth areas, channel constraints and flood control structures built below the one hundred-year flood elevation do not necessarily restrict channel migration and should not be considered to limit the channel migration zone unless demonstrated otherwise using scientific and technical information.

Master programs shall implement the following principles:

(i) Where feasible, give preference to nonstructural flood

hazard reduction measures over structural measures.

(ii) Base shoreline master program flood hazard reduction provisions on applicable watershed management plans, comprehensive flood hazard management plans, and other comprehensive planning efforts, provided those measures are consistent with the Shoreline Management Act and this chapter.

(iii) Consider integrating master program flood hazard reduction provisions with other regulations and programs, including (if applicable):

- ✎ Storm water management plans;
- ✎ Flood plain regulations, as provided for in chapter 86.16 RCW;
- ✎ Critical area ordinances and comprehensive plans, as provided in chapter 36.70A RCW; and
- ✎ The National Flood Insurance Program.

(iv) Assure that flood hazard protection measures do not result in a net loss of ecological functions associated with the rivers and streams.

(v) Plan for and facilitate returning river and stream corridors to more natural hydrological conditions. Recognize that seasonal flooding is an essential natural process.

(vi) When evaluating alternate flood control measures, consider the removal or relocation of structures in flood-prone areas.

(vii) Local governments are encouraged to plan for and facilitate removal of artificial restrictions to natural channel migration, restoration of off channel hydrological connections and return river processes to a more natural state where feasible and

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appropriate.

(c) **Standards.** Master programs shall implement the following standards within shoreline jurisdiction:

(i) Development in flood plains should not significantly or cumulatively increase flood hazard or be inconsistent with a comprehensive flood hazard management plan adopted pursuant to chapter 86.12 RCW, provided the plan has been adopted after 1994 and approved by the department. New development or new uses in shoreline jurisdiction, including the subdivision of land, should not be established when it would be reasonably foreseeable that the development or use would require structural flood hazard reduction measures within the channel migration zone or floodway. The following uses and activities may be appropriate and/or necessary within the channel migration zone or floodway:

✎ Actions that protect or restore the ecosystem-wide processes or ecological functions.

✎ Forest practices in compliance with the Washington State Forest Practices Act and its implementing rules.

✎ Existing and ongoing agricultural practices, provided that no new restrictions to channel movement occur.

✎ Mining when conducted in a manner consistent with the environment designation and with the provisions of WAC 173-26-241 (3)(h).

✎ Bridges, utility lines, and other public utility and transportation structures where no other feasible alternative exists or the alternative would result in unreasonable and disproportionate
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cost. Where such structures are allowed, mitigation shall address impacted functions and processes in the affected section of watershed or drift cell.

✎ Repair and maintenance of an existing legal use, provided that such actions do not cause significant ecological impacts or increase flood hazards to other uses.

✎ Development with a primary purpose of protecting or restoring ecological functions and ecosystem-wide processes.

✎ Modifications or additions to an existing nonagricultural legal use, provided that channel migration is not further limited and that the new development includes appropriate protection of ecological functions.

✎ Development in incorporated municipalities and designated urban growth areas, as defined in chapter 36.70A RCW, where existing structures prevent active channel movement and flooding.

✎ Measures to reduce shoreline erosion, provided that it is demonstrated that the erosion rate exceeds that which would normally occur in a natural condition, that the measure does not interfere with fluvial hydrological and geomorphological processes normally acting in natural conditions, and that the measure includes appropriate mitigation of impacts to ecological functions associated with the river or stream.

(ii) Allow new structural flood hazard reduction measures in shoreline jurisdiction only when it can be demonstrated by a scientific and engineering analysis that they are necessary to protect existing development, that nonstructural measures are not

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feasible, that impacts on ecological functions and priority species and habitats can be successfully mitigated so as to assure no net loss, and that appropriate vegetation conservation actions are undertaken consistent with WAC 173-26-221(5).

Structural flood hazard reduction measures shall be consistent with an adopted comprehensive flood hazard management plan approved by the department that evaluates cumulative impacts to the watershed system.

(iii) Place new structural flood hazard reduction measures landward of the associated wetlands, and designated vegetation conservation areas, except for actions that increase ecological functions, such as wetland restoration, or as noted below. Provided that such flood hazard reduction projects be authorized if it is determined that no other alternative to reduce flood hazard to existing development is feasible. The need for, and analysis of feasible alternatives to, structural improvements shall be documented through a geotechnical analysis.

(iv) Require that new structural public flood hazard reduction measures, such as dikes and levees, dedicate and improve public access pathways unless public access improvements would cause unavoidable health or safety hazards to the public, inherent and unavoidable security problems, unacceptable and unmitigable significant ecological impacts, unavoidable conflict with the proposed use, or a cost that is disproportionate and unreasonable to the total long-term cost of the development.

(v) Require that the removal of gravel for flood management

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purposes be consistent with an adopted flood hazard reduction plan and with this chapter and allowed only after a biological and geomorphological study shows that extraction has a long-term benefit to flood hazard reduction, does not result in a net loss of ecological functions, and is part of a comprehensive flood management solution.

(4) **Public access.**

(a) **Applicability.** Public access includes the ability of the general public to reach, touch, and enjoy the water's edge, to travel on the waters of the state, and to view the water and the shoreline from adjacent locations. Public access provisions below apply to all shorelines of the state unless stated otherwise.

(b) **Principles.** Local master programs shall:

(i) Promote and enhance the public interest with regard to rights to access waters held in public trust by the state while protecting private property rights and public safety.

(ii) Protect the rights of navigation and space necessary for water-dependent uses.

(iii) To the greatest extent feasible consistent with the overall best interest of the state and the people generally, protect the public's opportunity to enjoy the physical and aesthetic qualities of shorelines of the state, including views of the water.

(iv) Regulate the design, construction, and operation of permitted uses in the shorelines of the state to minimize, insofar as practical, interference with the public's use of the water.

(c) **Planning process to address public access.** Local governments should plan for an integrated shoreline area public

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access system that identifies specific public needs and opportunities to provide public access. Such a system can often be more effective and economical than applying uniform public access requirements to all development. This planning should be integrated with other relevant comprehensive plan elements, especially transportation and recreation. The planning process shall also comply with all relevant constitutional and other legal limitations that protect private property rights.

Where a port district or other public entity has incorporated public access planning into its master plan through an open public process, that plan may serve as a portion of the local government's public access planning, provided it meets the provisions of this chapter. The planning may also justify more flexible offsite or special area public access provisions in the master program. Public participation requirements in WAC 173-26-201 (3)(b)(i) apply to public access planning.

At a minimum, the public access planning should result in public access requirements for shoreline permits, recommended projects, port master plans, and/or actions to be taken to develop public shoreline access to shorelines on public property. The planning should identify a variety of shoreline access opportunities and circulation for pedestrians (including disabled persons), bicycles, and vehicles between shoreline access points, consistent with other comprehensive plan elements.

(d) **Standards.** Shoreline master programs should implement the following standards:

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(i) Based on the public access planning described in (c) of this subsection, establish policies and regulations that protect and enhance both physical and visual public access. The master program shall address public access on public lands. The master program should seek to increase the amount and diversity of public access to the state's shorelines consistent with the natural shoreline character, property rights, public rights under the Public Trust Doctrine, and public safety.

(ii) Require that shoreline development by public entities, including local governments, port districts, state agencies, and public utility districts, include public access measures as part of each development project, unless such access is shown to be incompatible due to reasons of safety, security, or impact to the shoreline environment. Where public access planning as described in WAC 173-26-221 (4)(c) demonstrates that a more effective public access system can be achieved through alternate means, such as focusing public access at the most desirable locations, local governments may institute master program provisions for public access based on that approach in lieu of uniform site-by-site public access requirements.

(iii) Provide standards for the dedication and improvement of public access in developments for water-enjoyment, water-related, and nonwater-dependent uses and for the subdivision of land into more than four parcels. In these cases, public access should be required except:

(A) Where the local government provides more effective public

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access through a public access planning process described in WAC 173-26-221 (4)(c).

(B) Where it is demonstrated to be infeasible due to reasons of incompatible uses, safety, security, or impact to the shoreline environment or due to constitutional or other legal limitations that may be applicable.

In determining the infeasibility, undesirability, or incompatibility of public access in a given situation, local governments shall consider alternate methods of providing public access, such as offsite improvements, viewing platforms, separation of uses through site planning and design, and restricting hours of public access.

(C) For individual single-family residences not part of a development planned for more than four parcels.

(iv) Adopt provisions, such as maximum height limits, setbacks, and view corridors, to minimize the impacts to existing views from public property or substantial numbers of residences. Where there is an irreconcilable conflict between water-dependent shoreline uses or physical public access and maintenance of views from adjacent properties, the water-dependent uses and physical public access shall have priority, unless there is a compelling reason to the contrary.

(v) Assure that public access improvements do not result in a net loss of shoreline ecological functions.

(5) ***Shoreline vegetation conservation.***

(a) **Applicability.** Vegetation conservation includes

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activities to protect and restore vegetation along or near marine and freshwater shorelines that contribute to the ecological functions of shoreline areas. Vegetation conservation provisions include the prevention or restriction of plant clearing and earth grading, vegetation restoration, and the control of invasive weeds and nonnative species.

Unless otherwise stated, vegetation conservation does not include those activities covered under the Washington State Forest Practices Act, except for conversion to other uses and those other forest practice activities over which local governments have authority. As with all master program provisions, vegetation conservation provisions apply even to those shoreline uses and developments that are exempt from the requirement to obtain a permit. Like other master program provisions, vegetation conservation standards do not apply retroactively to existing uses and structures, such as existing agricultural practices.

(b) **Principles.** The intent of vegetation conservation is to protect and restore the ecological functions and ecosystem-wide processes performed by vegetation along shorelines. Vegetation conservation should also be undertaken to protect human safety and property, to increase the stability of river banks and coastal bluffs, to reduce the need for structural shoreline stabilization measures, to improve the visual and aesthetic qualities of the shoreline, to protect plant and animal species and their habitats, and to enhance shoreline uses.

Master programs shall include: Planning provisions that

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address vegetation conservation and restoration, and regulatory provisions that address conservation of vegetation; as necessary to assure no net loss of shoreline ecological functions and ecosystem-wide processes, to avoid adverse impacts to soil hydrology, and to reduce the hazard of slope failures or accelerated erosion.

Local governments should address ecological functions and ecosystem-wide processes provided by vegetation as described in WAC 173-26-201 (3)(d)(i).

Local governments may implement these objectives through a variety of measures, where consistent with Shoreline Management Act policy, including clearing and grading regulations, setback and buffer standards, critical area regulations, conditional use requirements for specific uses or areas, mitigation requirements, incentives and nonregulatory programs.

In establishing vegetation conservation regulations, local governments must use available scientific and technical information, as described in WAC 173-26-201 (2)(a). At a minimum, local governments should consult shoreline management assistance materials provided by the department and *Management Recommendations for Washington's Priority Habitats*, prepared by the Washington state department of fish and wildlife where applicable.

Current scientific evidence indicates that the length, width, and species composition of a shoreline vegetation community contribute substantively to the aquatic ecological functions.

Likewise, the biota within the aquatic environment is essential to

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ecological functions of the adjacent upland vegetation. The ability of vegetated areas to provide critical ecological functions diminishes as the length and width of the vegetated area along shorelines is reduced. When shoreline vegetation is removed, the narrower the area of remaining vegetation, the greater the risk that the functions will not be performed.

In the Pacific Northwest, aquatic environments, as well as their associated upland vegetation and wetlands, provide significant habitat for a myriad of fish and wildlife species. Healthy environments for aquatic species are inseparably linked with the ecological integrity of the surrounding terrestrial ecosystem. For example, a nearly continuous corridor of mature forest characterizes the natural riparian conditions of the Pacific Northwest. Riparian corridors along marine shorelines provide many of the same functions as their freshwater counterparts. The most commonly recognized functions of the shoreline vegetation include, but are not limited to:

- ✎ Providing shade necessary to maintain the cool temperatures required by salmonids, spawning forage fish, and other aquatic biota.

- ✎ Providing organic inputs critical for aquatic life.

- ✎ Providing food in the form of various insects and other benthic macroinvertebrates.

- ✎ Stabilizing banks, minimizing erosion, and reducing the occurrence of landslides. The roots of trees and other riparian vegetation provide the bulk of this function.

- ✎ Reducing fine sediment input into the aquatic environment

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through storm water retention and vegetative filtering.

- ✎ Filtering and vegetative uptake of nutrients and pollutants from ground water and surface runoff.

- ✎ Providing a source of large woody debris into the aquatic system. Large woody debris is the primary structural element that functions as a hydraulic roughness element to moderate flows. Large woody debris also serves a pool-forming function, providing critical salmonid rearing and refuge habitat. Abundant large woody debris increases aquatic diversity and stabilization.

- ✎ Regulation of microclimate in the stream-riparian and intertidal corridors.

- ✎ Providing critical wildlife habitat, including migration corridors and feeding, watering, rearing, and refugia areas.

Sustaining different individual functions requires different widths, compositions and densities of vegetation. The importance of the different functions, in turn, varies with the type of shoreline setting. For example, in forested shoreline settings, periodic recruitment of fallen trees, especially conifers, into the stream channel is an important attribute, critical to natural stream channel maintenance. Therefore, vegetated areas along streams which once supported or could in the future support mature trees should be wide enough to accomplish this periodic recruitment process.

Woody vegetation normally classed as trees may not be a natural component of plant communities in some environments, such as in arid climates and on coastal dunes. In these instances, the width of a vegetated area necessary to achieve the full suite of

vegetation-related shoreline functions may not be related to vegetation height.

Local governments should identify which ecological processes and functions are important to the local aquatic and terrestrial ecology and conserve sufficient vegetation to maintain them. Such vegetation conservation areas are not necessarily intended to be closed to use and development but should provide for management of vegetation in a manner adequate to assure no net loss of shoreline ecological functions.

(c) **Standards.** Master programs shall implement the following requirements in shoreline jurisdiction.

Establish vegetation conservation standards that implement the principles in WAC 173-26-221 (5)(b). Methods to do this may include setback or buffer requirements, clearing and grading standards, regulatory incentives, environment designation standards, or other master program provisions. Selective pruning of trees for safety and view protection may be allowed and the removal of noxious weeds should be authorized.

Additional vegetation conservation standards for specific uses are included in WAC 173-26-241(3).

(6) ***Water quality, storm water, and nonpoint pollution.***

(a) **Applicability.** The following section applies to all development and uses in shorelines of the state, as defined in WAC 173-26-020, that affect water quality.

(b) **Principles.** Shoreline master programs shall, as stated in RCW 90.58.020, protect against adverse impacts to the public health,
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to the land and its vegetation and wildlife, and to the waters of the state and their aquatic life, through implementation of the following principles:

(i) Prevent impacts to water quality and storm water quantity that would result in a net loss of shoreline ecological functions, or a significant impact to aesthetic qualities, or recreational opportunities.

(ii) Ensure mutual consistency between shoreline management provisions and other regulations that address water quality and storm water quantity, including public health, storm water, and water discharge standards. The regulations that are most protective of ecological functions shall apply.

(c) **Standards.** Shoreline master programs shall include provisions to implement the principles of this section.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 90.58.060 and 90.58.200. 04-01-117 (Order 03-02), § 173-26-221, filed 12/17/03, effective 1/17/04.]

WAC 173-26-241 Shoreline uses. (1) **Applicability.** The provisions in this section apply to specific common uses and types of development to the extent they occur within shoreline jurisdiction. Master programs should include these, where applicable, and should include specific use provisions for other common uses and types of development in the jurisdiction. All uses and development must be consistent with the provisions of the environment designation in which they are located and the general

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regulations of the master program.

(2) **General use provisions.**

(a) **Principles.** Shoreline master programs shall implement the following principles:

(i) Establish a system of use regulations and environment designation provisions consistent with WAC 173-26-201 (2)(d) and 173-26-211 that gives preference to those uses that are consistent with the control of pollution and prevention of damage to the natural environment, or are unique to or dependent upon uses of the state's shoreline areas.

(ii) Ensure that all shoreline master program provisions concerning proposed development of property are established, as necessary, to protect the public's health, safety, and welfare, as well as the land and its vegetation and wildlife, and to protect property rights while implementing the policies of the Shoreline Management Act.

(iii) Reduce use conflicts by including provisions to prohibit or apply special conditions to those uses which are not consistent with the control of pollution and prevention of damage to the natural environment or are not unique to or dependent upon use of the state's shoreline. In implementing this provision, preference shall be given first to water-dependent uses, then to water-related uses and water-enjoyment uses.

(iv) Establish use regulations designed to assure no net loss of ecological functions associated with the shoreline.

(b) **Conditional uses.**

(i) Master programs shall define the types of uses and development that require shoreline conditional use permits pursuant to RCW 90.58.100(5). Requirements for a conditional use permit may be used for a variety of purposes, including:

✎ To effectively address unanticipated uses that are not classified in the master program as described in WAC 173-27-030.

✎ To address cumulative impacts.

✎ To provide the opportunity to require specially tailored environmental analysis or design criteria for types of use or development that may otherwise be inconsistent with a specific environment designation within a master program or with the Shoreline Management Act policies.

In these cases, allowing a given use as a conditional use could provide greater flexibility within the master program than if the use were prohibited outright.

(ii) If master programs permit the following types of uses and development, they should require a conditional use permit:

(A) Uses and development that may significantly impair or alter the public's use of the water areas of the state.

(B) Uses and development which, by their intrinsic nature, may have a significant ecological impact on shoreline ecological functions or shoreline resources depending on location, design, and site conditions.

(C) Development in critical saltwater habitats.

NEW SECTION 173-26-241(2)(b)(ii)(D)

(D) Commercial geoduck aquaculture in critical saltwater

habitats, regardless if considered development or not.

(iii) The provisions of this section are minimum requirements and are not intended to limit local government's ability to identify other uses and developments within the master program as conditional uses where necessary or appropriate.

(3) **Standards.** Master programs shall establish a comprehensive program of use regulations for shorelines and shall incorporate provisions for specific uses consistent with the following as necessary to assure consistency with the policy of the act and where relevant within the jurisdiction.

(a) **Agriculture.**

(i) For the purposes of this section, the terms agricultural activities, agricultural products, agricultural equipment and facilities and agricultural land shall have the specific meanings as provided in WAC 173-26-020.

(ii) Master programs shall not require modification of or limit agricultural activities occurring on agricultural lands. In jurisdictions where agricultural activities occur, master programs shall include provisions addressing new agricultural activities on land not meeting the definition of agricultural land, conversion of agricultural lands to other uses, and other development on agricultural land that does not meet the definition of agricultural activities.

(iii) Nothing in this section limits or changes the terms of the current exception to the definition of substantial development.

A substantial development permit is required for any agricultural

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development not specifically exempted by the provisions of RCW 90.58.030 (3)(e)(iv).

(iv) Master programs shall use definitions consistent with the definitions found in WAC 173-26-020(3).

(v) New agricultural activities are activities that meet the definition of agricultural activities but are proposed on land not currently in agricultural use. Master programs shall include provisions for new agricultural activities to assure that:

(A) Specific uses and developments in support of agricultural use are consistent with the environment designation in which the land is located.

(B) Agricultural uses and development in support of agricultural uses, are located and designed to assure no net loss of ecological functions and to not have a significant adverse impact on other shoreline resources and values.

Measures appropriate to meet these requirements include provisions addressing water quality protection, and vegetation conservation, as described in WAC 173-26-220 (5) and (6). Requirements for buffers for agricultural development shall be based on scientific and technical information and management practices adopted by the applicable state agencies necessary to preserve the ecological functions and qualities of the shoreline environment.

(vi) Master programs shall include provisions to assure that development on agricultural land that does not meet the definition of agricultural activities, and the conversion of agricultural land to nonagricultural uses, shall be consistent with the environment
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designation, and the general and specific use regulations applicable to the proposed use and do not result in a net loss of ecological functions associated with the shoreline.

(b) **Aquaculture.** Aquaculture is the culture or farming of food fish, shellfish, or other aquatic plants and animals. This activity is of statewide interest. Properly managed, it can result in long-term over short-term benefit and can protect the resources and ecology of the shoreline. Aquaculture is a water-dependent ~~on the use of the water area~~ and, when consistent with control of pollution and prevention of damage to the environment, is a preferred use of the water area. ~~Local government should consider local ecological conditions and provide limits and conditions to assure appropriate compatible types of aquaculture for the local conditions as necessary to assure no net loss of ecological functions.~~

Potential locations for aquaculture are relatively restricted due to specific requirements for water quality, temperature, flows, oxygen content, adjacent land uses, wind protection, commercial navigation, and, in marine waters, salinity. The technology associated with some forms of present-day aquaculture is still in its formative stages and experimental. Local shoreline master programs should therefore recognize the necessity for some latitude in the development of this use as well as its potential impact on existing uses and natural systems.

Local government should also consider how to minimize introducing conflicting uses into adjoining upland areas which could threaten water quality for existing shellfish areas or impinge on

subsistence, commercial, or recreational shellfish operations.

Local government should set forth limits and conditions and follow the mitigation sequence in WAC 173-26-201(2)(e) to assure no net loss of ecological functions.

Aquaculture should not be permitted in areas where it would result in a net loss of ecological functions, adversely impact critical saltwater or freshwater habitats, suspend contaminated sediments that don't meet state sediment standards, ~~eelgrass and macroalgae~~, or ~~significantly~~ conflict with navigation and other water-dependent uses. Aquacultural facilities should be designed and located so as not to spread disease to native aquatic life, establish new nonnative species which cause significant ecological impacts, or significantly impact the aesthetic qualities of the shoreline. Impacts to ecological functions shall be mitigated according to the mitigation sequence described in WAC 173-26-201(2)(e)~~020~~.

(i) Additional provisions for commercial geoduck aquaculture.

(A) Consistent with preferences and priorities for preferred uses contained in WAC 173-26-201(2)(d), local governments should classify appropriate areas for commercial geoduck aquaculture. Local governments may choose to classify additional shoreline areas to address geoduck aquaculture.

Local shoreline master programs should specify how public access will be provided or maintained by commercial geoduck aquaculture operations to publically-owned lands.

(B) Siting

Commercial geoduck aquaculture should be directed to sites with acceptable water quality, appropriate sediments and topography, and adequate land and water access that support geoduck aquaculture operations without significant clearing or grading of the area to be planted.

(C) Conditional use permit.

(I) Conditional use permits are required for new and expanded commercial geoduck aquaculture in critical saltwater habitats.

Local governments should establish monitoring and reporting requirements necessary to verify that geoduck aquaculture operations are in compliance with shoreline limits and conditions set forth in conditional use permits.

(II) Permit review and approval

Local governments should require an operations plan be submitted as part of a commercial geoduck aquaculture shoreline conditional use permit. The operations plan should contain at a minimum:

- A copy of the federal or state permit application and permit for the site if submitted to the US Army Corps of Engineers or Washington Department of Ecology.
- A description of all activities anticipated within the next five years as a supplement to information contained in the federal or state permit.
- Any monitoring or reporting requirements set by the local government.
- And, if not contained in the provided federal or state

permit documents:

- o Proof of property owner permission for the commercial geoduck operation. Either a certified letter from the property owner giving permission for planting and harvesting or a copy of the relevant property owner contract or agreement that contains permission is acceptable.
- o A map showing property boundaries and ownership, including all adjacent properties and owners.
- o A list adjacent property owners' names, addresses, phone numbers, and parcel numbers.
- o Measures to achieve no net loss of ecological function consistent with mitigation sequence described in WAC-173-26-201(2)(e) and WAC 173-26-241(3)(b)(i)(E) .
- o Management practices that will be used for reducing impacts from mooring, parking, noise, lights, litter, and other impacts associated with operations.

Local conditional permit approvals should recognize that harvest may continue for five or more years after the last planting of geoduck seed and consider the limits and conditions in WAC 173-26-241(3)(b)(i)(E).

Local governments should provide public notice to all property owners within 300 feet of the proposed project boundary.

(III) Commercial geoduck aquaculture conditional use permits

renewals.

CUPs for commercial geoduck expire in five years unless reviewed and approved. A supplemental operations plan must be submitted by the project proponent 60 days prior to the expiration date of the permit. The supplemental operations plan must describe any changes to the original operations plan, plus the following:

- A description of anticipated planting and harvesting activities for the next five years.
- A copy of any production data submitted to the department of fish and wildlife during the permit period, and a site map showing the subareas of planting and harvesting.

Commercial geoduck aquaculture conditional use permits must be renewed every five years.

Additional limits and conditions may be placed on the proponent and operations for the five years following the renewal date. Any changes in limits and conditions at the time of permit renewal only apply to new geoduck plantings and subsequent harvest of those geoducks and associated siting and operations. Renewed permits may have one tier of limits and conditions that apply to only harvesting of geoduck planted during the previous five years, and a second tier of limited and conditions that apply to geoduck planting and subsequent harvesting for the next five years.

Local governments may deny a conditional use permit renewal if limits and conditions set by the original permit were not met. Denying a permit cannot interfere with the right of a geoduck operator to harvest already planted geoduck.

(IV) Local governments should consider limits and conditions when reviewing and approving commercial geoduck aquaculture conditional use permits to protect ecological functions and minimize use conflicts.

Limits and conditions must take into account that this water-dependent use is a preferred-use of the water, and that commercial geoduck operators have a right to harvest geoduck once planted.

Commercial geoduck aquaculture workers accomplish on-site work during low tides, which may occur at night or on weekends. Workers must be allowed to work during low tides but local governments may require limits and conditions to reduce conflicts such as noise and lights with adjacent existing uses.

Because technologies utilized in geoduck aquaculture are evolving, local shoreline master programs should recognize the necessity for some latitude in the development of this use and its potential impacts, especially during five year permit reviews. Permits should be reviewed using the best scientific and technical information available.

Limits and conditions may include:

- Prohibiting or limiting the practice of placing tanks or pools or other impervious materials directly on the intertidal sediments.

- Prohibiting or limiting the use of trucks, tractors, forklifts and other motorized equipment below the ordinary high water mark and requiring that such equipment, when authorized, use a single

identified lane to cross the upper intertidal to minimize impacts.

- Limiting on-site activities during specific periods to minimize impacts on fish and wildlife.

- Limiting alterations to the natural condition of the site, including removal of vegetation or rocks, regrading of the natural slope and sediments or redirecting freshwater flows.

- Limiting the area of the site that can be planted or harvested at one time, to limit the areal extent of impacts.

- Limiting the portion of a site that can be covered by predator exclusion devices at any one time.

- Requiring compliance with the Washington department of fish and wildlife shellfish transfer permitting system to minimize the risk of transferring or introducing parasites and disease into areas where they currently do not exist.

- Requiring installation of property corner markers that are visible at low tide.

- Requiring buffers between geoduck operations and sensitive habitat features like critical habitats.

- Requiring measures to minimize impacts to fish and wildlife.

- Requiring the use of predator exclusion devices with minimal adverse ecological effects and requiring that they be removed as soon as they are no longer needed for predator exclusion.

- Requiring the use of the best available methods to minimize turbid runoff from the water jets used to harvest geoducks.

- Establishing limits on the number of barges or vessels that

can be moored or beached at the site as well as duration limits.

- Requiring measures to minimize impacts to navigation, including recreational uses of the water over the site at high tide.

- Requiring good housekeeping practices at geoduck aquaculture sites, including removing equipment, tools, extra materials and all wastes at the end of each working day.

(c) **Boating facilities.** For the purposes of this chapter, "boating facilities" excludes docks serving four or fewer single-family residences. Shoreline master programs shall contain provisions to assure no net loss of ecological functions as a result of development of boating facilities while providing the boating public recreational opportunities on waters of the state.

Where applicable, shoreline master programs should, at a minimum, contain:

(i) Provisions to ensure that boating facilities are located only at sites with suitable environmental conditions, shoreline configuration, access, and neighboring uses.

(ii) Provisions that assure that facilities meet health, safety, and welfare requirements. Master programs may reference other regulations to accomplish this requirement.

(iii) Regulations to avoid, or if that is not possible, to mitigate aesthetic impacts.

(iv) Provisions for public access in new marinas, particularly where water-enjoyment uses are associated with the marina, in accordance with WAC 173-26-221(4).

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(v) Regulations to limit the impacts to shoreline resources from boaters living in their vessels (live-aboard).

(vi) Regulations that assure that the development of boating facilities, and associated and accessory uses, will not result in a net loss of shoreline ecological functions or other significant adverse impacts.

(vii) Regulations to protect the rights of navigation.

(viii) Regulations restricting vessels from extended mooring on waters of the state except as allowed by applicable state regulations and unless a lease or permission is obtained from the state and impacts to navigation and public access are mitigated.

(d) **Commercial development.** Master programs shall first give preference to water-dependent commercial uses over nonwater-dependent commercial uses; and second, give preference to water-related and water-enjoyment commercial uses over nonwater-oriented commercial uses.

The design, layout and operation of certain commercial uses directly affects their classification with regard to whether or not they qualify as water-related or water-enjoyment uses. Master programs shall assure that commercial uses that may be authorized as water-related or water-enjoyment uses are required to incorporate appropriate design and operational elements so that they meet the definition of water-related or water-enjoyment uses.

Master programs should require that public access and ecological restoration be considered as potential mitigation of impacts to shoreline resources and values for all water-related or

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water-dependent commercial development unless such improvements are demonstrated to be infeasible or inappropriate. Where commercial use is proposed for location on land in public ownership, public access should be required. Refer to WAC 173-26-221(4) for public access provisions.

Master programs should prohibit nonwater-oriented commercial uses on the shoreline unless they meet the following criteria:

(i) The use is part of a mixed-use project that includes water-dependent uses and provides a significant public benefit with respect to the Shoreline Management Act's objectives such as providing public access and ecological restoration; or

(ii) Navigability is severely limited at the proposed site; and the commercial use provides a significant public benefit with respect to the Shoreline Management Act's objectives such as providing public access and ecological restoration.

In areas designated for commercial use, nonwater-oriented commercial development may be allowed if the site is physically separated from the shoreline by another property or public right of way.

Nonwater-dependent commercial uses should not be allowed over water except in existing structures or in the limited instances where they are auxiliary to and necessary in support of water-dependent uses.

Master programs shall assure that commercial development will not result in a net loss of shoreline ecological functions or have significant adverse impact to other shoreline uses, resources and

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values provided for in RCW 90.58.020 such as navigation, recreation and public access.

(e) **Forest practices.** Local master programs should rely on the Forest Practices Act and rules implementing the act and the *Forest and Fish Report* as adequate management of commercial forest uses within shoreline jurisdiction. However, local governments shall, where applicable, apply this chapter to Class IV-General forest practices where shorelines are being converted or are expected to be converted to nonforest uses.

Forest practice conversions and other Class IV-General forest practices where there is a likelihood of conversion to nonforest uses, shall assure no net loss of shoreline ecological functions and shall maintain the ecological quality of the watershed's hydrologic system. Master programs shall establish provisions to ensure that all such practices are conducted in a manner consistent with the master program environment designation provisions and the provisions of this chapter. Applicable shoreline master programs should contain provisions to ensure that when forest lands are converted to another use, there will be no net loss of shoreline ecological functions or significant adverse impacts to other shoreline uses, resources and values provided for in RCW 90.58.020 such as navigation, recreation and public access.

Master programs shall implement the provisions of RCW 90.58.150 regarding selective removal of timber harvest on shorelines of statewide significance. Exceptions to this standard shall be by conditional use permit only.

Lands designated as "forest lands" pursuant to RCW 36.70A.170 shall be designated consistent with either the "natural," "rural conservancy," environment designation.

Where forest practices fall within the applicability of the Forest Practices Act, local governments should consult with the department of natural resources, other applicable agencies, and local timber owners and operators.

(f) **Industry.** Master programs shall first give preference to water-dependent industrial uses over nonwater-dependent industrial uses; and second, give preference to water-related industrial uses over nonwater-oriented industrial uses.

Regional and statewide needs for water-dependent and water-related industrial facilities should be carefully considered in establishing master program environment designations, use provisions, and space allocations for industrial uses and supporting facilities. Lands designated for industrial development should not include shoreline areas with severe environmental limitations, such as critical areas.

Where industrial development is allowed, master programs shall include provisions that assure that industrial development will be located, designed, or constructed in a manner that assures no net loss of shoreline ecological functions and such that it does not have significant adverse impacts to other shoreline resources and values.

Master programs should require that industrial development consider incorporating public access as mitigation for impacts to shoreline resources and values unless public access cannot be

provided in a manner that does not result in significant interference with operations or hazards to life or property, as provided in WAC 173-26-221(4).

Where industrial use is proposed for location on land in public ownership, public access should be required. Industrial development and redevelopment should be encouraged to locate where environmental cleanup and restoration of the shoreline area can be incorporated. New nonwater-oriented industrial development should be prohibited on shorelines except when:

(i) The use is part of a mixed-use project that includes water-dependent uses and provides a significant public benefit with respect to the Shoreline Management Act's objectives such as providing public access and ecological restoration; or

(ii) Navigability is severely limited at the proposed site; and the industrial use provides a significant public benefit with respect to the Shoreline Management Act's objectives such as providing public access and ecological restoration.

In areas designated for industrial use, nonwater-oriented industrial uses may be allowed if the site is physically separated from the shoreline by another property or public right of way.

(g) **In-stream structural uses.** "In-stream structure" means a structure placed by humans within a stream or river waterward of the ordinary high-water mark that either causes or has the potential to cause water impoundment or the diversion, obstruction, or modification of water flow. In-stream structures may include those for hydroelectric generation, irrigation, water supply, flood

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control, transportation, utility service transmission, fish habitat enhancement, or other purpose.

In-stream structures shall provide for the protection and preservation, of ecosystem-wide processes, ecological functions, and cultural resources, including, but not limited to, fish and fish passage, wildlife and water resources, shoreline critical areas, hydrogeological processes, and natural scenic vistas. The location and planning of in-stream structures shall give due consideration to the full range of public interests, watershed functions and processes, and environmental concerns, with special emphasis on protecting and restoring priority habitats and species.

(h) **Mining.** Mining is the removal of sand, gravel, soil, minerals, and other earth materials for commercial and other uses. Historically, the most common form of mining in shoreline areas is for sand and gravel because of the geomorphic association of rivers and sand and gravel deposits. Mining in the shoreline generally alters the natural character, resources, and ecology of shorelines of the state and may impact critical shoreline resources and ecological functions of the shoreline. However, in some circumstances, mining may be designed to have benefits for shoreline resources, such as creation of off channel habitat for fish or habitat for wildlife. Activities associated with shoreline mining, such as processing and transportation, also generally have the potential to impact shoreline resources unless the impacts of those associated activities are evaluated and properly managed in accordance with applicable provisions of the master program.

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A shoreline master program should accomplish two purposes in addressing mining. First, identify where mining may be an appropriate use of the shoreline, which is addressed in this section and in the environment designation sections above. Second, ensure that when mining or associated activities in the shoreline are authorized, those activities will be properly sited, designed, conducted, and completed so that it will cause no net loss of ecological functions of the shoreline.

(i) Identification of shoreline areas where mining may be designated as appropriate shall:

(A) Be consistent with the environment designation provisions of WAC 173-26-211 and where applicable WAC 173-26-251(2) regarding shorelines of statewide significance; and

(B) Be consistent with local government designation of mineral resource lands with long-term significance as provided for in RCW 36.70A.170 (1)(c), 36.70A.130, and 36.70A.131; and

(C) Be based on a showing that mining is dependent on a shoreline location in the city or county, or portion thereof, which requires evaluation of geologic factors such as the distribution and availability of mineral resources for that jurisdiction, as well as evaluation of need for such mineral resources, economic, transportation, and land use factors. This showing may rely on analysis or studies prepared for purposes of GMA designations, be integrated with any relevant environmental review conducted under SEPA (chapter 43.21C RCW), or otherwise be shown in a manner consistent with RCW 90.58.100(1) and WAC 173-26-201 (2)(a).

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(ii) Master programs shall include policies and regulations for mining, when authorized, that accomplish the following:

(A) New mining and associated activities shall be designed and conducted to comply with the regulations of the environment designation and the provisions applicable to critical areas where relevant. Accordingly, meeting the no net loss of ecological function standard shall include avoidance and mitigation of adverse impacts during the course of mining and reclamation. It is appropriate, however, to determine whether there will be no net loss of ecological function based on evaluation of final reclamation required for the site. Preference shall be given to mining proposals that result in the creation, restoration, or enhancement of habitat for priority species.

(B) Master program provisions and permit requirements for mining should be coordinated with the requirements of chapter 78.44 RCW.

(C) Master programs shall assure that proposed subsequent use of mined property is consistent with the provisions of the environment designation in which the property is located and that reclamation of disturbed shoreline areas provides appropriate ecological functions consistent with the setting.

(D) Mining within the active channel or channels (a location waterward of the ordinary high-water mark) of a river shall not be permitted unless:

(I) Removal of specified quantities of sand and gravel or other materials at specific locations will not adversely affect the natural

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processes of gravel transportation for the river system as a whole;
and

(II) The mining and any associated permitted activities will not have significant adverse impacts to habitat for priority species nor cause a net loss of ecological functions of the shoreline.

(III) The determinations required by (h)(ii)(D)(I) and (II) of this subsection shall be made consistent with RCW 90.58.100(1) and WAC 173-26-201 (2)(a). Such evaluation of impacts should be appropriately integrated with relevant environmental review requirements of SEPA (chapter 43.21C RCW) and the SEPA rules (chapter 197-11 WAC).

(IV) In considering renewal, extension or reauthorization of gravel bar and other in-channel mining operations in locations where they have previously been conducted, local government shall require compliance with this subsection (D) to the extent that no such review has previously been conducted. Where there has been prior review, local government shall review previous determinations comparable to the requirements of this section to assure compliance with this subsection (D) under current site conditions.

(V) The provisions of this section do not apply to dredging of authorized navigation channels when conducted in accordance with WAC 173-26-231 (3)(f).

(E) Mining within any channel migration zone that is within Shoreline Management Act jurisdiction shall require a shoreline conditional use permit.

(i) **Recreational development.** Recreational development
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includes commercial and public facilities designed and used to provide recreational opportunities to the public. Master programs should assure that shoreline recreational development is given priority and is primarily related to access to, enjoyment and use of the water and shorelines of the state. Commercial recreational development should be consistent with the provisions for commercial development in (d) of this subsection. Provisions related to public recreational development shall assure that the facilities are located, designed and operated in a manner consistent with the purpose of the environment designation in which they are located and such that no net loss of shoreline ecological functions or ecosystem-wide processes results.

In accordance with RCW 90.58.100(4), master program provisions shall reflect that state-owned shorelines are particularly adapted to providing wilderness beaches, ecological study areas, and other recreational uses for the public and give appropriate special consideration to the same.

For all jurisdictions planning under the Growth Management Act, master program recreation policies shall be consistent with growth projections and level-of-service standards established by the applicable comprehensive plan.

(j) **Residential development.** Single-family residences are the most common form of shoreline development and are identified as a priority use when developed in a manner consistent with control of pollution and prevention of damage to the natural environment.

Without proper management, single-family residential use can cause

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significant damage to the shoreline area through cumulative impacts from shoreline armoring, storm water runoff, septic systems, introduction of pollutants, and vegetation modification and removal. Residential development also includes multifamily development and the creation of new residential lots through land division.

Master programs shall include policies and regulations that assure no net loss of shoreline ecological functions will result from residential development. Such provisions should include specific regulations for setbacks and buffer areas, density, shoreline armoring, vegetation conservation requirements, and, where applicable, on-site sewage system standards for all residential development and uses and applicable to divisions of land in shoreline jurisdiction.

Residential development, including appurtenant structures and uses, should be sufficiently set back from steep slopes and shorelines vulnerable to erosion so that structural improvements, including bluff walls and other stabilization structures, are not required to protect such structures and uses. (See RCW 90.58.100(6).)

New over-water residences, including floating homes, are not a preferred use and should be prohibited. It is recognized that certain existing communities of floating and/or over-water homes exist and should be reasonably accommodated to allow improvements associated with life safety matters and property rights to be addressed provided that any expansion of existing communities is the minimum necessary to assure consistency with constitutional and

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other legal limitations that protect private property.

New multiunit residential development, including the subdivision of land for more than four parcels, should provide community and/or public access in conformance to the local government's public access planning and this chapter.

Master programs shall include standards for the creation of new residential lots through land division that accomplish the following:

(i) Plats and subdivisions must be designed, configured and developed in a manner that assures that no net loss of ecological functions results from the plat or subdivision at full build-out of all lots.

(ii) Prevent the need for new shoreline stabilization or flood hazard reduction measures that would cause significant impacts to other properties or public improvements or a net loss of shoreline ecological functions.

(iii) Implement the provisions of WAC 173-26-211 and 173-26-221.

(k) **Transportation and parking.** Master programs shall include policies and regulations to provide safe, reasonable, and adequate circulation systems to, and through or over shorelines where necessary and otherwise consistent with these guidelines.

Transportation and parking plans and projects shall be consistent with the master program public access policies, public access plan, and environmental protection provisions.

Circulation system planning shall include systems for
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pedestrian, bicycle, and public transportation where appropriate. Circulation planning and projects should support existing and proposed shoreline uses that are consistent with the master program.

Plan, locate, and design proposed transportation and parking facilities where routes will have the least possible adverse effect on unique or fragile shoreline features, will not result in a net loss of shoreline ecological functions or adversely impact existing or planned water-dependent uses. Where other options are available and feasible, new roads or road expansions should not be built within shoreline jurisdiction.

Parking facilities in shorelines are not a preferred use and shall be allowed only as necessary to support an authorized use. Shoreline master programs shall include policies and regulations to minimize the environmental and visual impacts of parking facilities.

(1) **Utilities.** These provisions apply to services and facilities that produce, convey, store, or process power, gas, sewage, communications, oil, waste, and the like. On-site utility features serving a primary use, such as a water, sewer or gas line to a residence, are "accessory utilities" and shall be considered a part of the primary use.

Master programs shall include provisions to assure that:

All utility facilities are designed and located to assure no net loss of shoreline ecological functions, preserve the natural landscape, and minimize conflicts with present and planned land and shoreline uses while meeting the needs of future populations in areas planned to accommodate growth.

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Utility production and processing facilities, such as power plants and sewage treatment plants, or parts of those facilities, that are nonwater-oriented shall not be allowed in shoreline areas unless it can be demonstrated that no other feasible option is available.

Transmission facilities for the conveyance of services, such as power lines, cables, and pipelines, shall be located outside of the shoreline area where feasible and when necessarily located within the shoreline area shall assure no net loss of shoreline ecological functions.

Utilities should be located in existing rights of way and corridors whenever possible.

Development of pipelines and cables on tidelands, particularly those running roughly parallel to the shoreline, and development of facilities that may require periodic maintenance which disrupt shoreline ecological functions should be discouraged except where no other feasible alternative exists. When permitted, provisions shall assure that the facilities do not result in a net loss of shoreline ecological functions or significant impacts to other shoreline resources and values.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 90.58.060 and 90.58.200. 04-01-117 (Order 03-02), § 173-26-241, filed 12/17/03, effective 1/17/04.]

5/25/91.]