

CRITICAL AREAS

A FRAGILE RESOURCE THAT NEEDS OUR HELP

Here at the City of Auburn, we all care about our environment. We live, work and play within a fragile ecosystem. Throughout our community, we have a number of areas that have been identified as environmentally sensitive, or "critical areas". A critical area performs a variety of valuable and beneficial biological and physical functions that benefit the environment, the City and its residents. Alteration of critical areas, and the areas that are in close proximity to these sensitive features, can threaten public safety or the environment if not done with the right approach and proper care. Therefore, the City works hard to regulate and protect these natural resources, but we need your help.



FOR MORE INFORMATION:

Visit our website: www.auburnwa.gov/environment

For project specific technical assistance visit our Customer Service Center located at 1 East Main Street, 2nd floor.

You may also contact Chris Andersen, Environmental Services Manager at 253-876-1962 or via email environmentalservices@auburnwa.gov

Your Mayor Nancy Backus and City Council are working hard to protect and improve our environment. We hope you will join us as partners in protection.



CRITICAL AREAS

ENVIRONMENTALLY SENSITIVE AREAS AND YOUR COMMUNITY

Brought to you by
Community Development & Public Works

HOW DOES THIS AFFECT YOU?

Auburn City Codes allow for a comprehensive, fair and balanced regulatory system that protects the public from injury, loss of life, property damage, and financial loss. A system that can provide property owners greater certainty that the use and activities on their property are permitted, prohibited or regulated due to the potential presence of a critical area on or near their land. This information can be used to alert potential buyers, assessors or owners of the development limitations of critical areas and their buffers. Being informed and complying with the codes before you do any work will save you money and time in the long run; minimize risk to public health and safety; and protect public and private property.

Before conducting any of the following activities, please be sure to become fully informed by contacting the City first:

- Excavation or ground disturbance of any kind
- Dumping or filling with other material
- Draining , flooding or disturbing water levels
- Diverting, restricting, or increasing water flows
- Demolishing, constructing or altering a structure
- Destroying, altering or planting vegetation
- Releasing any materials into the water or soil

CRITICAL AREAS INCLUDE

Areas that are considered critical may include but are not limited to:

- Wetlands and Streams
- Wildlife Habitats
- Geological Hazards
- Floodplains
- Steep Slopes

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?



WETLANDS & STREAMS

maintain the quality of our water, provide fish and wildlife habitats. Provide an area for recreation, education and scientific study.



WILDLIFE HABITATS

provide important access to food, cover, breeding and nesting area for fish and other wildlife. Help to maintain air and water quality.



GEOLOGICAL HAZARDS

are areas that pose a risk of landslide, erosion, earthquakes or volcanic activity.



FLOODPLAINS

help store and transport flood and storm water. Allows for the deep drainage of groundwater.



STEEP SLOPES

are areas that have a high or very high risk of landslide.

WHAT CAN I DO TO HELP?

Before starting any projects on your property or activities that involve ground disturbance or the removal of vegetation check with the City. City staff members are an excellent resource and can assist you with determining whether a critical area may be located on or near your property, and if so, provide information on how you can help protect this area. We want to work together to accomplish your goals while preserving our precious natural resources. Contact Environmental Services for a technical assistance site visit to be sure the activity is authorized and safe for the environment. While it may limit what can be done on your property, this review will ensure you maintain compliance and avoid potentially expensive actions to restore unauthorized work. We are committed to working together to come up with alternatives or options that can be approved.

If you are not considering doing anything on your property but you observe activity that you are concerned about, please contact Auburn Code Compliance at 253-931-3020, and select option 4. Our Code Compliance Officers can investigate the concern and work to address the situation. It is important that you provide the address in question, the specific activity or potential violation, and your contact info so that we can discuss concerns or obtain additional information.

Our Code Compliance Officers work in partnership with community members to promote and maintain the minimum standards established by city code. We take pride in knowing that together, through our efforts, we will maintain property values, improve the quality of our neighborhoods, and preserve Auburn as a city we are proud to call home.

Auburn City Code 16.10 provides the majority of standards and procedures that apply to critical areas while accommodating the rights of property owners to use their property in a reasonable manner.