

## Proposed changes to the Critical Areas Regulations

### Clarified Linkage between SMP and Critical Areas Regulations

- The SMP regulations will adopt by reference the most recent critical areas regulations
- These regulations were recently adopted in 2015 and are now proposed with minor amendments
  - Shoreline buffer dimensions are addressed in the SMP only
  - Allowed alterations listed in the Critical Area Regulations apply only to non-shoreline areas
  - Certain exceptions in the critical area regulations do not apply in the SMP (e.g. reasonable use)

### Update Wetland Rules

- Washington State Department of Ecology guidance for wetland protection was revised in summer 2018. This affected certain regulations in the City’s existing critical areas regulations:
  - Habitat values of 5 are now grouped with values of 3 and 4
  - As a result, **recommended wetland buffer dimensions have decreased**

WETLAND CATEGORY AND CHARACTERISTICS	EXISTING BUFFER	PROPOSED BUFFER
<b>Category 1</b>		
Habitat score from 6 to 7 points	165 feet	110 feet
Habitat score from 3 to 5 points	125 feet	75 feet
<b>Category II</b>		
Habitat score from 6 to 7 points	165 feet	110 feet
Habitat score from 3 to 5 points	100 feet	75 feet
<b>Category III</b>		
Habitat score from 6 to 7 points	165 feet	110 feet
Habitat score from 3 to 5 points	75 feet	60 feet
<b>Category IV</b>	50 feet	40 feet

### Clarified Pipe Lake Buffer

- Pipe Lake is considered a fish and wildlife habitat conservation area and thus falls under certain critical areas regulations (CMC 18.65)
- However, the Pipe Lake shoreline buffer dimension and allowed uses are provided in the SMP (CMC 16.05)
- Other changes to the critical areas regulations can be viewed on the City’s Shoreline Master Program website: [www.covingtonwa.gov/SMP/](http://www.covingtonwa.gov/SMP/)