

<p>Proposed Draft Policy: Proposed new text and proposed ((removed text))</p>	<p>Finding</p>
<p>Goal NE 9 <u>Provide healthy urban forests in urban unincorporated areas to support ecosystem services, public health, economic vitality, increased environmental stability and resiliency, and a better quality of life.</u></p>	<p>Preservation of an urban forest supports many ecological functions and low impact development principles within urban areas in support of human health and wellbeing. Urban forests:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve air quality and reduce air temperatures (MPP-En-3, -4, -8, -9, -22); (CPP Env-8, CC-4) • Attenuate stormwater impacts (MPP-En-9, -18); (CPP Env-7) • Mitigate for noise and light pollution (MPP-En-7, -8); (CPP Env-9) • Enhance habitat and help protect water quality (MPP-En-3, -10, -13, -16); (CPP Env-4, -8) • Provide environmental protection and enhance quality of life (GMA Goal 10 – Environment) <p>The legislative findings in RCW 76.15.005 also describe the ecological and other benefits provided by urban forests.</p>
<p>Objective NE 9.A <u>Develop an urban forest management program for urban unincorporated areas that identifies, protects, and restores forests and plants that have significant environmental, habitat, cultural, and aesthetic value.</u></p>	<p>Proposed NE Obj 9.A directly supports MPP-En-9: “Enhance urban tree canopy to support community resilience, mitigate urban heat, manage stormwater, conserve energy, improve mental and physical health, and strengthen economic prosperity”, and furthers the purpose and findings of the Urban Forest Management code in RCW 76.15:</p> <p>RCW 76.15.005(1) Trees and other woody vegetation are a necessary and important part of community environments. Urban and community forests have many values and uses including conserving energy, reducing air and water pollution and soil erosion, contributing to property values, attracting business, reducing glare and noise, providing aesthetic and historical values, providing wood products, and affording comfort and protection for humans and wildlife.</p> <p>RCW 76.15.007(1) Encourage planning for, planting, maintaining, and managing of trees in the state's cities, counties, and tribal lands and maximize the potential of tree and vegetative cover in improving the quality of the environment.</p> <p>In addition, native vegetation and trees hold cultural importance for local tribes, particularly Culturally Modified Trees (CMTs). Proposed Obj 9.A supports protection of important cultural practices and elements.</p>
<p>Policy NE 9.A.1 <u>The county shall model the urban forest management program on Evergreen Communities Act requirements and take steps necessary for recognition for unincorporated urban areas as an Evergreen Community under the Evergreen Communities Act (Chapter 76.15 RCW).</u></p>	<p>Modeling an urban forest management program after the Evergreen Communities Act supports efforts to preserve and protect the important ecological functions performed by trees as highlighted within the Multicounty Planning Policies and the Countywide Planning Policies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improves air quality and reduces air temperatures (MPP-En-3, -4, -8, -9, -22); (CPP Env-8, CC-4) • Attenuation of stormwater (MPP-En-9, -18); (CPP Env-7) • Mitigation for noise and light pollution (MPP-En-7, -8); (CPP Env-9) • Enhances habitat and helps protect water quality (MPP-En-3, -10, -13, -16); (CPP Env-4, -8)
<p>Policy NE 9.A.2 <u>The county shall prepare an urban forest management plan that meets requirements in chapter 76.15 RCW and establishes an area-wide minimum tree canopy goal for urban unincorporated areas of at least 38%.</u></p>	<p>This policy proposes a goal of at least 38% canopy coverage within unincorporated urban areas, as this number reflects the most current tree canopy coverage analysis of Snohomish County’s unincorporated UGAs produced by Surface Water Management using 2020 data.</p>
<p>Policy NE 9.A.3 <u>The county should identify existing programs to preserve and restore native vegetation and tree canopy, especially where the programs protect habitats, contribute to overall ecological function, and demonstrate capacity to sequester and store carbon.</u></p>	<p>The county currently manages several regulatory and non-regulatory programs that seek to preserve and restore trees and vegetation. These programs should be identified and reviewed for their applicability to be incorporated into the urban forest management program to recognize maximum benefits.</p>
<p>Policy NE 9.A.4 <u>The county’s urban forest management program should prioritize areas where tree canopy and understory vegetation would not otherwise have protection under critical areas, shoreline, or drainage regulations and may include groves of trees and understory,</u></p>	<p>While existing regulatory programs currently account for the preponderance of protected tree canopy, the purpose of this policy is to identify and protect additional forested areas and significant trees to maximize health and aesthetic benefits provided to the community. Increasing tree canopy coverage will help climate adaptation and resilience, mitigate heat island effects, improve air quality, and sequester and store more carbon in support of CCPs CC-6 and CC-7.</p>

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<p><u>significant individual trees or tree stands, street trees and community trees, and forested hillsides</u></p>	
<p>Policy NE 9.A.5 <u>The county’s urban forest management program shall take into consideration requirements under the Growth Management Act to accommodate population, housing, and employment growth within unincorporated Urban Growth Areas while also preserving the urban forest canopy.</u></p>	<p>Proposed policy NE 9.A.5 acknowledges the intent to balance the goals under GMA to accommodate growth while also protecting the environment (RCW 36.70A.020), recognizing the ecological benefits that trees contribute while also achieving land use densities needed to accommodate growth forecasts.</p>
<p>Policy NE 9.A.6 <u>The county shall periodically perform a tree canopy assessment and inventory to identify areas for protection and enhancement and report this information to the County Council. Subsequent assessments and inventories should evaluate the success and failures of past actions taken to protect or enhance tree canopy and refine methodologies to improve implementation of the inventory and assessment processes and the urban tree program overall. The assessment will use best available qualitative and quantitative information and can rely on LiDAR/Satellite imagery.</u></p>	<p>Proposed policy NE 9.A.6 identifies implementation and adaptive management strategies to evaluate and improve the urban tree management program. This strategy will rely on best available qualitative and quantitative information reflecting MPP-En-6, and CPP Env-1.</p>
<p>Policy NE 9.A.7 <u>The county should seek funding to support the urban forest management program including but not limited to opportunities to fund improvements along forested corridors preserved before contemporary critical area standards were adopted in 2007, and to fund improvements in alignment with the goals of the Salmon Safe Puget Sound Pledge, the Orca Recovery Plan, the Puget Sound Partnership, and the Regional Open Space Conservation Plan.</u></p>	<p>Robust funding for the urban forest management program will support implementation and further consistency with the listed RCWs, MPPs, and CPPs: RCW 76.15.005, RCW 76.15.007, RCW 76.15.060, RCW 76.15.100(2)(c), MPP-En-9, MPP-En-13, MPP-En-16, MPP-En-17, MPP-CC-4, MPP-En-Action-4, CPP-Env-3, CPP-Env-4, and CPP-CC-4.</p>
<p>Objective NE 9.B <u>Apply regulatory and non-regulatory strategies to retain and restore urban forest areas.</u></p>	<p>Proposed objective NE 9.B supports the multi-faceted approach used by the county to achieve a no net loss standard for environmental protection of ecological functions and values and recognizes the broad scope of ecological functions and values attributed to trees and canopy cover. This multi-faceted approach is consistent with the GMA in WAC 365-190-080(3) and CPP Env-5.</p>
<p>Policy NE 9.B.1 <u>Based on the results from a periodic assessment of urban tree canopy, the county shall, as needed, review codes and administrative rules to identify where protections for urban forests and tree canopy may need to be revised and identify where new development may need to follow appropriate tree management practices.</u></p>	<p>Proposed policy NE 9.B.1 addresses implementation and adaptive management strategies to evaluate and improve the urban tree management program as described in RCW 76.15.090.</p>
<p>Policy NE 9.B.2 <u>The county shall investigate the creation of incentives to protect urban forest areas that provide significant functions and values that are outside critical areas. When landmark trees, a stand or grove of trees, or additional canopy cover is retained beyond regulatory standards, consider incentives such as stormwater modeling credits, density/building height bonuses, adjusted building</u></p>	<p>Proposed policy NE 9.B.2 directs the County to investigate the creation of incentives for preserving tree canopy as a component of the county’s multi-faceted approach to environmental protection, and as supported by WAC 365-190-080(3) and MPP-En-10.</p>

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<p><u>setbacks or parking requirements. Incentivize tree retention and planting as visual amenities, providers of environmental services, and drivers of economic development.</u></p>	
<p>Policy NE 9.B.3 <u>County departments shall develop management strategies for urban forests on properties within their custodial property inventories. Management strategies for county-owned urban forests may include levels of service standards for forested areas within urban parks, right of way planning, impact fees, and properties purchased, donated, and/or managed by the county for conservation or restoration.</u></p>	<p>Proposed policy NE 9.B.3 addresses opportunities for the county as a property owner to contribute to the urban tree canopy through management strategies that include level of service standards, right of way planning, impact fees, and conservation and restoration of properties managed by the county. Land acquisition is a component of the county’s multi-faceted approach, and management for protection and conservation purposes is consistent with MPP-En-10, CPP-Env-1, and CPP-Env-5.</p>
<p>Policy NE 9.B.4 <u>The county shall develop community-wide education and stewardship programs to enhance the community’s awareness of the value of trees and the urban forest. Encourage engagement in the care and maintenance of trees and related resources by including actions and resources to educate and involve the public.</u></p>	<p>Proposed policy NE 9.B.4 addresses public education and community involvement as supported by RCW 76.15.090 and MPP-En-10. Public education and participation are key components of the county’s multi-faceted approach for environmental protection as supported by WAC 365-190-080(3).</p>
<p>Policy NE 9.B.5 <u>The county shall examine options for establishing a tree canopy fee-in-lieu program, taking into consideration other county objectives including but not limited to, urban development needs and urban growth targets, habitat restoration and/or enhancement projects, level-of-service standards for county parks, right-of-way planting, and frontage improvements, and equitable access to urban forested open space.</u></p>	<p>Proposed policy NE 9.B.5 addresses the potential for a fee-in-lieu program to help mitigate for and offset urban tree canopy removal when necessary to balance other county goals and objectives associated with urban growth. Fee-in-lieu programs offer flexibility for development and a source of potential funding for acquisition, public education, canopy restoration, and program management support, and could potentially help re-distribute ecological benefits to improve conditions in underserved communities. A fee-in-lieu program could help support the individual components of the county’s multi-faceted approach as supported by WAC 365-190-080(3), and help with implementation of policies related to equity and public health improvements such as MPP-En-4, MPP-En-8, MPP-En-15, CPP-Env-3, and CPP-Env-8, and further supported by RCW 76.15.005 [Findings—Intent—2021 c 209: (1)], 76.15.007(6), 76.15.090(3)(b)(ii) and 76.15.100(2)(b) and (5); and by priorities established in the Regional Open Space Conservation Plan.</p> <p>Preferences have shifted away from on-site mitigation in favor of mitigation banking and fee-in-lieu programs as priority according to the 2008 Federal Mitigation Rule (33 CFR Part 332.3[b] and 40 CFR Part 230.93[b]) as discussed in Volume 1 of the riparian science guidance from WDFW.</p>
<p>Objective NE 9.C <u>Apply best management practices to maintain urban forest health, optimize ecological functions, and provide public health benefits.</u></p>	<p>Proposed objective NE 9.C addresses use of best management practices for urban forest health and tree care practices as promoted in RCW 76.15.060, 76.15.090(3)(a)(ii), and 76.15.110(5); and MPP-En-6 and CPP-Env-1.</p>
<p>Policy 9.NE C.1 <u>Departments with urban forest on lands in their custodial inventory should share standardized maintenance practices to increase overall consistency in tree maintenance, resulting in better tree health and longevity.</u></p>	<p>Proposed policy 9.C.1 addresses county responsibility and practices to care for and maintain trees enabling long term performance of ecological functions. RCW 76.15.090(3)(a)(ii) requires adoption of a tree care ordinance as one of the criteria for consideration as an Evergreen Community, which addresses tree conservation and maintenance.</p>
<p>Policy NE 9.C.2 <u>The county shall employ best management practices, taking into consideration the potential impacts of said practices to environmental and human health, to control invasive species which</u></p>	<p>Proposed policy 9.C.2 addresses best management practices employed to control invasive species while protecting environmental and human health in support of MPP-En-19 and CPP-Env-10.</p>

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<p><u>are destructive to forest health and eradicate them where possible on publicly owned property.</u></p>	
<p>Policy NE 9.C.3 <u>The county’s tree maintenance program must include integrated pest management strategies to protect soil, water, and air quality, and minimize use of pesticides and herbicides.</u></p>	<p>Proposed policy 9.C.3 addresses pest management to protect tree health without posing a risk to the environment or to human health. RCW 76.15.110(4) and (5), MPP-En-19 and CPP Env-10 provide the basis for supporting integrated pest management strategies.</p>
<p>Policy NE 9.C.4 <u>The urban forest management plan shall address standards and practices for resolving potential land use incompatibility issues including, but not limited to maintaining view corridors, preserving solar access for solar panels and gardens, minimizing property line issues where canopy and roots extend onto adjacent properties, preventing interference with public and private utilities, removal of invasive plants and hazardous trees, minimizing risk of potential damage from windthrow, illegal dumping and garbage cleanup in forested areas, and public access.</u></p>	<p>Proposed policy 9.C.4 addresses conflicts known to arise when trees and forested areas are preserved within developed communities. RCW 76.15.110(4) and (5) and RCW 76.15.090(3)(b) indicate that urban forest management plans should address options for resolving these types of conflicts.</p>
<p>Policy NE 9.C.5 <u>The urban forest management plan shall address and assign maintenance responsibilities for urban forest areas and identify access for maintenance purposes.</u></p>	<p>Proposed policy 9.C.5 directs that the urban forest management plan shall address maintenance responsibilities and access for maintenance purposes, which is consistent with RCW 76.15.110, CPP Env-1, and MPP-En-13.</p>
<p>Policy NE 9.C.6 <u>The county shall provide educational materials aimed towards a greater understanding by the public of its individual and combined impacts on natural systems, the ecological and economic value of urban forests, and urban forest management and maintenance best management practices for private property.</u></p>	<p>Proposed policy 9.C.6 addresses the value of public understanding of ecological conditions, relationships, and impacts. When the public understands why and how to protect the environment, many will employ voluntary measures in their daily lives. Public education also helps to support compliance with regulatory programs. RCW 76.15.050 and WAC 365-190-080(3) acknowledge and promote public education as a tool for environmental protection.</p>
<p>Objective NE 9.D <u>The county shall provide urban forest resources, including financial, education, and access, equitably across the urban forests.</u></p>	<p>Proposed Obj 9.D addresses an equitable distribution of access to forested areas and of resources allocated to the urban forest management program. RCW 76.15.090(3), 76.15.100, 76.15.110(8), MPP-En-15, and MPP-CC-Action-4 all support equity with a particular focus on providing benefits to vulnerable and historically underserved communities.</p>
<p>Policy NE 9.D.1 <u>The county shall allocate resources to support the county’s urban forest management program, including financial and programmatic, in a manner that recognizes geographic, racial, and social equity.</u></p>	<p>Proposed policy 9.D.1 addresses an equitable distribution of urban tree management program resources across all communities with a particular focus on communities that may not currently benefit from the ecological, social and health benefits provided by nearby forested areas. This policy is proposed in compliance with RCW 76.15.100(6) directing urban tree management program allocation of resources to benefit vulnerable populations.</p>
<p>Policy NE 9.D.2 <u>The county shall work to create or preserve urban forest assets across unincorporated urban areas to help provide access to urban forest benefits equitably for all residents of a community.</u></p>	<p>Proposed policy 9.D.2 addresses an equitable distribution of urban tree management program resources and assets in support of policy direction from MPP-En-15, MPP-CC-Action-4, CPP-Env-8 and 9, CPP-PS-18 and CPP-CC-5.</p>
<p>Policy NE 9.D.3 <u>The county shall identify in the county’s capital improvement program actions and areas for acquisition of urban forest assets that would reduce unequal access to the benefits of urban forest.</u></p>	<p>Proposed policy 9.D.3 addresses an equitable distribution of urban tree management program resources and assets in support of policy direction from MPP-En-15, MPP-CC-Action-4, CPP-Env-8 and 9, CPP-PS-18 and CPP-CC-5.</p>

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<p>Policy NE 9.D.4 <u>The urban forest management plan should incorporate the conservation needs assessment from the Regional Open Space Conservation Plan to identify gaps in equitable access to open space, as it applies to urban forests.</u></p>	<p>Proposed policy 9.D.4 addresses alignment between the urban forest management program and the needs assessment published in the Regional Open Space Conservation Plan which identifies communities with limited access to open space and the health and social benefits provided by forests. This alignment is supported by MPP-En-12, MPP-En-Action-4, and CPP-Env-3.</p>
<p>Objective NE 9.E <u>Consider management coordination of urban forests and trees along with planning for transportation and utilities in the right of way (ROW) and tree maintenance in utility corridors.</u></p>	<p>Proposed Obj 9.E addresses coordination between the urban forest management program and the placement of trees along transportation and utility corridors. RCW 76.15.010(7) includes these corridors as part of the urban and community forest and suggests that maintenance of these corridor trees be addressed in the tree ordinance required for designation as an Evergreen Community (RCW 76.15.090(3)(a)(ii) and 76.15.110(5)).</p>
<p>Policy NE 9.E.1 <u>The county shall require that the location and type of trees planted in proximity to above ground and underground utilities be selected to avoid damage to the utility’s infrastructure and consider the long-term health and maintenance needs of the urban forest and trees. The county shall review and update administrative rules regarding vegetation planting, maintenance, and restoration standards in the right-of-way to reduce long-term maintenance burden of utilities and improve the health of trees planted or protected according to those rules.</u></p>	<p>Proposed policy 9.E.1 addresses several key concerns related to long term health and maintenance of trees planted in transportation or utility corridors as suggested for inclusion in the tree ordinance required for designation as an Evergreen Community (RCW 76.15.090(3)(a)(ii) and 76.15.110(5)(e)-(i)).</p>
<p>Policy NE 9.E.2 <u>The county shall evaluate opportunities in transportation corridors to provide tree and shrub planting in conjunction with land development and county projects. County departments shall review codes, administrative design rules, and maintenance standards to find opportunities to enhance vegetation along transportation corridors. Priority shall be given to public safety.</u></p>	<p>Proposed policy 9.E.2 addresses alignment between the urban forest management program and current development requirements related to planting trees along the road corridors. These trees would be included in the tree inventory required under RCW 76.15.090(3)(a)(v) for designation as an Evergreen Community. CPP-TR-15 and -17 give priority to public safety in design of the transportation network and RCW 76.15.060 also includes safety as a consideration when planting trees.</p>
<p>Policy NE 9.E.3 <u>The county shall promote reliance on native trees and vegetation to help manage stormwater, wherever feasible.</u></p>	<p>Proposed policy 9.E.3 addresses the role contributed by trees to stormwater management. Tree canopy prevents rain from hitting the ground and facilitates evaporation; tree roots stabilize soils reducing erosion and sediment loading and uptake ground water to support tree health. Preservation of trees and vegetation is considered as a low impact development principle for the management of stormwater. Relying on native trees to aid with stormwater management is supported by RCW 76.15.110(4)(f), MPP-En-9, MPP-En-18, MPP-En-Action-3, and CPP-Env-7.</p>
<p>Objective NE 9.F <u>Coordinate urban forest management and tree canopy retention goals with other local and regional environmental programs and initiatives.</u></p>	<p>Proposed Obj 9.F addresses coordination with other related initiatives to achieve mutual benefits, improve efficiency, and leverage investments. This coordination is a component of the county’s multifaceted approach to environmental protection and is supported by WAC 365-190-080(3), RCW 76.15.007(2) and .110(1), MPP-En-1, and CPP Env-1 and -2.</p>
<p>Policy NE 9.F.1 <u>The county’s urban forest management efforts should be coordinated with the urban forest preservation efforts of local cities, tribes, agencies, organizations, and adjacent counties.</u></p>	<p>Proposed policy 9.F.1 addresses coordination with other jurisdictions and agencies where appropriate to achieve mutual benefits, improve efficiency and leverage investments. This coordination is a component of the county’s multifaceted approach to environmental protection and is supported by WAC 365-190-080(3), RCW 76.15.007(2) and .110(1), MPP-En-1, and CPP Env-1 and -2.</p>
<p>Policy NE 9.F.2 <u>The county should develop a management approach for urban forests and trees that supports salmon recovery goals and Snohomish County’s commitment to Salmon Safe Puget Sound Pledge, the Orca Recovery Plan, the Regional Open Space Conservation Plan,</u></p>	<p>Proposed policy 9.F.2 addresses coordination with existing programs for the benefit of salmon recovery and the overall health of Puget Sound. Coordination with these initiatives is supported by RCW 76.15.005(5), RCW 76.15.007(7), RCW 76.15.060, RCW 76.15.100(2)(c), MPP-En-13, MPP-En-16, MPP-En-17, MPP-CC-4, MPP-En-Action-3 and -4, CPP-Env-3, CPP-Env-4, and CPP-CC-4.</p>

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<p><u>and the Priority Habitats and Species data from the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Puget Sound Partnership’s Action Agenda.</u></p>	
<p>Policy NE 9.F.3 <u>The county shall provide outreach programming to the public that is designed to raise the visibility of available opportunities for community partnerships with local organizations, schools, and agencies. The goal of this outreach programming is to increase awareness and understanding of the importance of protecting and caring for urban forests and to encourage participation in programs that support urban forest goals.</u></p>	<p>Proposed policy 9.F.3 acknowledges the value of public participation and education in support of existing programs that can contribute to success of an urban tree management program. Promoting public stewardship of urban forests and trees is a key element in the state legislator’s vision for the urban tree management program as evidenced by provisions in RCW 76.15.050 and 76.15.110(8).</p>
<p>Policy NE 9.F.4 <u>The county shall invite the public to participate in the development of the urban forest management program and preparation of the urban forest plan. The plan shall identify stewardship opportunities in support of long-term public participation and sustainable tree practices and policies.</u></p>	<p>Proposed policy 9.F.4 addresses the encouragement of public participation in the development of an urban forest management plan contained in RCW 76.15.110(8).</p>
<p>Policy NE 9.F.5 <u>The county shall coordinate with the Washington State Department of Natural Resources to identify and address in the urban forest management plan potential issues that could arise where the urban forest edge abuts working resource lands or the wildland interface edge. Where edge issues may arise, consideration must be given to GMA priorities related to critical area protection, natural resource management, and public safety.</u></p>	<p>Proposed policy 9.F.5 addresses the role of the state Department of Natural Resources in developing urban forest management plans (RCW 76.15.110(4) and (5)) and providing assistance to the county for addressing potential conflicts and safety issues (RCW 76.15.060).</p>