

Shoreline Management and Critical Areas Protections



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Planting and maintaining woody vegetation along streams provide a wealth of benefits and have shown that stream health is dependent on the presence of woody vegetation along its banks. Riparian forest buffers filter sediment from streams during storm events, remove nitrogen and phosphorous leaching from adjacent land uses, provide stability to the bank (wood root systems), shade and modify stream temperatures, reduce pollution, provide aquatic and wildlife habitat for many species, reduce stream velocity, and reduce down-stream flooding.

The County's Shoreline Management Program and Critical Areas Regulations provide protection for fish and wildlife habitat and aim to conserve the ecological functions of those habitats. Collectively, these regulations protect the critical habitats of lakes, streams, rivers, wetlands, and marine waters.

An example of how the County implements its shoreline and critical areas regulations to protect fish and wildlife habitat, is the State Route 92 Pilchuck River Bank Stabilization Project, a multi-year shoreline project that Planning and Development Services reviewed and permitted. This project was proposed by the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) to construct a 910-foot long revetment along the Pilchuck River to protect State Route (SR 92) from active erosion. For this project WSDOT provided stream buffer and mitigation consistent with the shoreline management regulations and the critical areas regulations.

