

Conservancy Environment

Statement of Intent

The objective in designating a Conservancy Environment is to protect, conserve, enhance and manage existing natural resource areas and valuable historic and cultural areas. This should be done in a manner that will insure recreational benefits to the public, or achieve sustained resource utilization without substantial adverse modification of shorelines or topography.

Designation Criteria

The Conservancy Environment should be applied to those areas which would most benefit the public by having their existing character maintained, but which are able to accept a limited level of development or resource utilization. Areas to be designated in the Conservancy Environment should possess one or more of the following criteria:

1. Areas which could satisfy the present or future recreation needs of the County's residents.
2. Areas possessing biophysical limitations too severe to allow them to develop to the extent provided in the Rural, Urban and Suburban Environments. Such limitations could include:
 - a. Areas of steep slopes, presenting erosion and slide hazards;
 - b. Areas prone to flooding including the 100-year flood plain;
 - c. Areas of unstable streambank configuration;
 - d. Areas with soils that have poor drainage.
3. Areas containing resources which lend themselves to management on a sustained-yield basis.
4. Areas possessing valuable natural resources or features, whose optimum use precludes more than an extremely low overall density of people, structures or livestock.
5. Areas possessing valuable natural resources or features which would tolerate only minimal changes in topography or the land/water interface.
6. Areas where more intensive development or use would be hazardous to public health and safety, or would result in interference with natural processes causing significant detriment to other resources.
7. Areas possessing aesthetic or recreational qualities of such high local or statewide significance that extensive modification or use would adversely affect such qualities.
8. Areas located in the floodway zones, and in many instances, the boulder zones of the County's river systems.
9. Areas which are free from extensive development, and can serve as needed open space by maintaining their existing character.

1. Management Policies

1. Give preference to those uses which do not permanently deplete the physical and biological resources of the Conservancy Environment.
2. Give priority to activities and uses of a nonpermanent or farming nature which do not substantially degrade the existing character of the Conservancy Environment.
3. Encourage the following types of uses to be predominant in a Conservancy Environment: outdoor recreation activities, timber harvesting on a sustained yield basis, aquaculture, and compatible agricultural uses.
4. Maintain the Conservancy Environment by encouraging recreational activities which will not be detrimental to the shoreline character or the forces which created and maintain the shoreline area.

5. Restrict new development to those which are compatible with the natural and biological limitations of the land and water and will not require extensive alteration of the land-water interface.
6. Discourage commercial and industrial uses other than aquaculture, commercial forestry, lumber mills and extraction of renewable sand, gravel and mineral resources.
7. Encourage the sustained yield management of natural resources and aquaculture crops within Conservancy Environments.
8. Prohibit development which would be hazardous to public health and safety, or which significantly interferes with natural processes.
9. Strictly regulate residential development, to maintain an overall density of less than one dwelling unit per two acres of land.
10. Allow beach enrichment projects when it can be shown that other portions of the shoreline will not be adversely affected.
11. Prohibit development which would permanently strip the shoreline of vegetative cover or cause substantial landslide, erosion, sedimentation or impairment of fish and aquatic life.
12. Minimize the construction of structural flood control works in this environment.
13. Prohibit the construction of flood control works or streambank stabilization projects which would contribute to destructive streamway channelization or substantial modification of existing shoreline character except for streamway rehabilitation projects.
14. Encourage streamway rehabilitation projects which will restore or enhance the natural streamway character.
15. Require that new developments be designed to preclude the need to provide them with structural flood control protection.