

Environment Designation Map Descriptions

The scale of the maps utilized to depict the shoreline planning environment designations was not large enough to allow for accurate description of all environment designation boundaries and limits. In addition, special situations developed related to environment designations which could not be completely described solely with the use of maps. Therefore, it became necessary to supplement the environment designation maps with the following explanatory text.

1. Marine Shoreline-Intertidal Areas

The predominant portion of unincorporated Snohomish County's marine shoreline has been designated as a Conservancy Environment. In most instances, this designation would extend from the landward boundary of the Shoreline Management Act's jurisdiction (usually some point on a steep bluff) seaward to include all of the intertidal area and the bedland, water column and water surface of the adjoining water body itself (Skagit Bay, Port Susan Bay, Possession Sound, or Puget Sound) under Snohomish County's jurisdiction. However, there were several instances where a combination of environment designations were employed in marine shoreline intertidal areas.

- a) Class I Accretion Beaches - the shoreline area between mean lower low water and the ordinary high water mark was designated Natural. The shoreline areas seaward of mean lower low water remained designated as Conservancy.
- b) Standard Oil Property (near Chenault Beach) - the intertidal zone from extreme low tide to the ordinary high water mark together with the adjoining uplands of an approximately 1000 foot wide shoreline area, was designated as an Urban Environment. The area seaward of extreme low tide in the remainder of Possession Sound in that vicinity was designated as a Conservancy Environment.
- c) Edwards Point - the intertidal zone between extreme low tide and the ordinary high water mark together with the adjoining upland extending north from the Union Oil Pier to the Edmonds City Limits were designated as an Urban Environment. Puget Sound extending seaward from extreme low tide remained designated as a Conservancy Environment.

2. Marine Shoreline - Uplands

The majority of unincorporated Snohomish County's marine shoreline uplands were designated as a Conservancy Environment as described earlier. However, in certain instances, an additional or alternate environment designation was applied.

- a) Port Susan Bay, Possession Sound and Puget Sound Steep Bluffs - the Conservancy Environment designation applied to the marine upland (defined as any area above the ordinary high water mark) was intended to be extended landward to include all steep bluffs of 15 percent slope or greater.

However an extensive amount of Port Susan Bay's steep bluff shorelines also have a second environment designation, which is Suburban. This designation is intended to be applied to all areas within 200 feet of the ordinary high water mark which have slopes of less than 15 percent and are suitable for residential type development. The Suburban designation would apply to all shoreline areas along Port Susan Bay, Possession Sound or Puget Sound possessing these characteristics, irrespective of whether or not the parallel Suburban environment designation had actually been applied to them on the maps.

- b) Port Susan Bay Waterfront Residential Communities - several of these communities including those at Warm Beach, McKee's Beach, Sunny Shores, Tulare Beach, Tulalip Shores, Hermosa Beach, Mission Beach and Priest Point have been designated as

Suburban Environments beginning at the ordinary high water mark and extending landward 200 feet.

- c) Standard Oil Property - the upland portion of a 1000 foot width of this shoreline area was designated as an Urban Environment.
- d) Edwards Point - the upland portion of this shoreline area extending north from the Union Oil Company pier to the Edmonds City Limits was designated as an Urban Environment.
- e) Point Wells - the upland portion of this shoreline area extending north from the King - Snohomish County boundary to the south town limits of Woodway was designated as an Urban Environment.
- f) Smith Island - the western boundary of the Urban designation on Smith Island and adjoining tidelands conforms to the following general description.

Proceed west 1700 feet from a point 260 feet south of the intersection of Sections 5, 6, 7, 8 of Twp. 29 N., Range 5 E., W.M. From this western boundary proceed northeast on a direct bearing toward the southeast corner of the Western Gear Test Cell (pond) a distance of 3950 feet.

It is the intent of this Master Program that the anticipated and preferred use of the current wetland areas on Smith Island designated as an URBAN environment, upon being filled, is for dry land log storage.

3. River Systems

The dynamic nature of river systems (especially in the Floodway Zones) requires that a flexible, responsive method of environment designations for these areas be utilized. The rapidly changing and shifting shorelines found in the Floodway Zones of the County's rivers would soon make static environment designations obsolete and useless. Therefore, it is the intent of the environment designation system utilized for these areas to reflect the actual current condition of these shoreline systems rather than a potentially outmoded set of maps.

Specifically, all gravel bars (unless otherwise explicitly designated) are to be given and retain the environment designation of Conservancy. As the gravel bar changes shape or size, the environment designation will change with it.

The method of employing the environment designation of Conservancy in gravel bar situations is also to be applied to the inaccessible and often quickly changing islands found within Floodway Zones of rivers. The environment designation of Conservancy will move and change according to the changing size and location of these islands.

- a) Quilceda Creek - east of Interstate Highway 5. Two parallel environment designations have been applied to Quilceda Creek. The inner environment designation is Conservancy. This designation is intended for the creek itself and all wetlands and steep slopes within the well-defined ravine through which it flows. The outer environment designation or Suburban is intended to be applied to those areas of less than 15 percent slope suitable for intensive development which are outside or on the upper edges of the ravine within 200 feet of the Quilceda Creek's ordinary high water mark.
- b) North Creek An Urban Designation is appropriate in recognition of the varied intensity of land use existing and permitted along that portion of North Creek subject to the Shoreline Management Act. This designation permits flexibility so as to preclude unnecessary conflict between other County land use plans and policies and this Master Program. However, it is also important to recognize the need to protect the ability of North Creek to continue to function as a valued natural system. Accordingly, it is intended that development along North Creek recognize the natural functioning of that water body by maintaining a setback of approximately one

hundred (100) feet from the ordinary high water mark for commercial and industrial uses and fifty (50) feet for residential uses except where creek crossing are necessitated or evidence supports setback modifications which sustain the purpose of this section. (Sec. 2 of Ord. 83-055 adopted May 23, 1983).

4. Union Oil Company Marsh Near Edmonds

The Department of Ecology has withheld approval of Snohomish County's environment designation for its portion of the Union Oil Company Marsh near Edmonds. The Snohomish County Master Program has designated the portion of the Marsh under its jurisdiction as an urban environment while the City of Edmonds Master Program, has proposed that its share of the Marsh be classified as a natural environment. Because these environment designations are incompatible when adjacent to each other in a physically similar shoreline area, the Department of Ecology has withheld approval of Snohomish County's urban designation until the City of Edmonds Master Program is submitted to them for approval. At that time, the Department of Ecology will consult with Snohomish County on the appropriate modification to their respective programs regarding this designation issue.