



Fish & Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas

What are they?

These are areas needed to conserve or maintain one or more plant or animal species. These species, or the environments that support multiple species, may be listed as having federal, state, or local importance.

Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas (FWHCA) are located throughout Tacoma. Streams, lakes, ponds, and marine waters, with their associated riparian zones, and biodiversity areas and corridors, and Oregon White Oak trees are some of the FWHCA in the City.

Why do we value them?



Plants and animals interact with their environments in unique and complex ways. Sometimes their function and value is not known until they are threatened, endangered, or lost.



Riparian zones are especially habitat-rich, dynamic systems that provide a transition and connection between water bodies and nearby lands.



Riparian zones help regulate the water cycle, provide shade, control run-off, support water quality, provide diverse conditions for fish spawning and breeding, and more.





How do we protect them?

- Stream classification and typing consistent with best available science.
- Provide larger buffers for riparian zones, filled with native vegetation.
- Manage FWHCAs to retain trees and vegetation, emphasizing native vegetation and controlling invasive species.
- Manage land uses at the edge of FWHCAs and their buffers by retaining native vegetation, and other natural barriers.
- Manage impervious surface and stormwater runoff near FWHCAs.
- Avoid and minimize habitat fragmentation, particularly for larger and more intact habitat areas. Provide vegetated corridors between habitat areas.
- Encourage environmental stewardship and management practices.

What changes are needed?

- Review stream typing system and buffer requirements
- Review and update biodiversity area/corridor size and modification allowances
- Determine whether code provisions should be added to clarify protections for Oregon White Oak trees
- For complete list: Tacoma.gov/CriticalAreas

Tacoma.gov/CriticalAreas



City of Tacoma
NATURAL RESOURCES