

The Planning Commission unanimously recommends that the Community Development Committee APPROVE the proposed vision, goals, and policies for the Environment Element of the 2044 Snoqualmie Comprehensive Plan and transmit them to the City Council for consideration.

It is the recommendation of the Planning Commission to approve proposed vision, goals, and policies for the Environment Element as presented in Attachment A.

RECOMMENDED BY THE CITY OF SNOQUALMIE PLANNING COMMISSION ON THE 18TH OF MARCH 2024.

_____ Date _____
Luke Marusiak
Commission Chair

Attest by:

Ashley Wragge
Planning Technician

1) The health, wildlife and ecosystem services and functions provided by the City's natural environment are protected and enhanced, and potential hazards to citizen health, welfare and property are minimized.

- a. Incorporate and utilize applicable best available science for purposes of designating and protecting all regulated critical areas and anadromous fisheries that need "special consideration" for their conservation and protection.
- b. Protect Snoqualmie's environmental critical areas, habitat, and the natural environment through land use plans, surface water management plans and programs, comprehensive park plans, development regulations and site-specific project review and consultation with affected Tribes.
- c. Consider areas of high wildlife movement and mortality and the needs of all roadway users when designing and building neighborhood traffic safety projects.
- d. Ensure the protection and recovery of ecosystems to provide healthy habitat and support fish, wildlife, and plant populations in a changing climate. This includes actively managing lands through controlling noxious weeds, restoring native vegetation, and monitoring project results.
- e. Coordinate with governmental agencies, non-profit organizations and Tribes to protect and enhance the environment through countywide and watershed planning, fish and wildlife resource management, and habitat protection networks across jurisdictional boundaries.
- f. Establish and maintain relations with Native American tribes for the preservation of archaeological sites and traditional cultural properties that are vulnerable to climate change.
- g. Actively manage city forest lands to decrease climate-exacerbated risks from severe wildfires, protect residents, and improve ecosystem health and habitat and encourage others to do so.
- h. Apply Best Available Science, including Traditional Ecological Knowledge, to protect critical areas, such as wetlands, landslide hazard and erosion-prone areas, and maintain these areas in their natural condition, including native vegetation preservation.
- i. Control the spread of noxious weeds as identified by King County Noxious Weed Control Board from public properties, particularly in more fire-prone areas like roadsides and utility corridors and if possible educate citizens about the control of noxious weeds on private property.
- j. Support integrated and interdisciplinary approaches for environmental planning and assessment
- k. Promote innovative and environmentally sensitive practices in site planning, design, materials selection, construction and maintenance.
- l. Encourage environmental stewardship on private and public lands through partnerships and voluntary efforts that protect, restore and enhance the quality and functions of critical areas and associated buffers.
- m. Support programs that ensure that all residents, regardless of race, social, or economic status, have clean air, clean water, and other elements of a healthy environment, and prioritize the reduction of impacts to vulnerable populations that have been disproportionately affected by climate change.

2) Rivers, streams aquifer recharge areas and other water resources within the City are protected and managed for multiple beneficial uses.

- a. Preserve and protect natural surface water storage sites, such as wetlands, aquifers, streams, and water bodies as these are critical features that support hydrological functions, water quality, regulate surface flows and recharge groundwater.

- b. Coordinate the management and restoration Snoqualmie watershed through participation in the Snoqualmie Watershed Forum and the implementation of the Puget Sound Action Agenda.
- c. Coordinate with WSDOT, King County, and neighboring jurisdictions to plan and prioritize culvert upgrades and utility crossings to ensure fish passage barrier removal, adequate projected stormwater passage, and continued climate-related adaptations to handle water passage into the future throughout Snoqualmie, especially where terrestrial species connectivity can be restored simultaneously (i.e., with wider bridges).
- d. Ensure that local regulations for surface and stormwater management allow for and encourage Low-Impact Development (LID) and Natural Drainage practices. Support retrofitting basins to improve stormwater management and quality.
- e. Encourage building construction that uses alternative techniques to minimize impervious surfaces and reduce harmful impacts to the natural environment and proximate waterways.
- f. Actively investigate and promote water conservation strategies to efficiently use the City's legal access to water, and to reduce the amount of wastewater to be treated, through such measures as rotating irrigation schedules, and by incentivizing or requiring installation of water-wise landscaping throughout the City.
- g. Work with the State Department of Ecology, King County, Tribes and other stakeholders to reduce or eliminate pollution sources and protect public health.
- h. Work in conjunction with King County to take corrective action to remove contaminant loading due to failing septic systems and stormwater runoff in susceptible recharge areas.
- i. Seek funding to support stormwater retrofitting and green technologies in areas where water quality is impacted by stormwater.
- j. Natural hydraulic, hydrologic and habitat functions, and scenic and recreational values of rivers, streams, wetlands and natural drainage courses are protected.
- k. Minimize stream crossings, utilizing bridges rather than culverts whenever feasible, and minimize new utility crossing impacts, when possible, by using techniques such as bridges, tunneling, or other innovative methods.
- l. Participate in regional species protection efforts, including salmon habitat enhancement and restoration. Identify, prioritize, and eliminate physical barriers (such as fish blocking culverts), and other impediments to anadromous fish spawning and rearing habitat.
- m. Maintain infrastructure located within stream corridors in accordance with Best Management Practices that minimize water quality impacts and pursue design modifications or alternative siting options for when significant alterations are undertaken.
- n. Protect wetlands areas, functions and values within the City and urban growth area, and allow the creation of wetlands where feasible and appropriate.
- o. Restore and maintain previously disturbed wetlands and stream buffers riparian management zones and their buffers where feasible; using the correct mitigation sequencing and maintain restored buffers for optimal ecosystem services.
- p. Ensure wetland regulations allow for conservation easements and other techniques to preserve their health and existence.

3) Public health and property damage risk associated with flood and geologic hazard areas have been reduced, while preventing irreparable harm to regionally significant ecological resources.

- a. Pursue strategies to lower the City's classification rating in the federal FEMA program.

- b. Protect properties and ecological functions in the floodplain with development regulations guided by standards established by FEMA, and the Department of Ecology, and Best Available Science that incorporates climate change projections.
- c. Pursue the reduction of accelerated erosion and sedimentation due to construction and construction-related activities.
- d. Protect areas with severe geologic hazard potential, limiting development in hazard areas or requiring development to minimize grading and enhance native vegetation to the greatest extent possible.
- e. Seek to restore natural vegetative cover and natural drainage features on degraded sites, including the removal of invasive weeds as necessary.
- f. Support the implementation of the City's Hazard Mitigation Plan to reduce risks associated with floods, erosion, damages to property owners, and other observed hazards and improve development regulations.