

Conservation Element

Goals, Policies, and Implementation Actions

City of Tumwater 2025 Comprehensive Plan

Balancing Nature and Community: Tumwater's Path to Sustainable Growth

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Conservation Element

Part 1 – Goals, Policies, and Implementation Actions



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Abbreviations Used in Document

CDD – Community Development Department

PRD – Parks, Recreation, and Facilities Department

RCW – Revised Code of Washington

TED – Transportation & Engineering Department

TMC – Tumwater Municipal Code

WRS – Water Resources & Sustainability Department

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1. Introduction

A. Background

The Conservation Element is part of Tumwater's Comprehensive Plan. It was created to meet the State Growth Management Act (Chapter 36.70A RCW) requirements to identify and protect critical environmental areas and valuable natural resources.

Tumwater's Vision, Mission, and Belief Statements that provide overarching direction for the future of Tumwater are found in the Comprehensive Plan Summary.

The Conservation Element aligns and is consistent with the other elements of the Comprehensive Plan.

Part 1 – Goals Policies, and Implementation Actions establishes Tumwater's goals and policies to set forth a direction to identify, protect, and conserve critical environmental areas and valuable natural resources in Tumwater.

B. How to Read this Part of the Element

In Part 1, Chapters 2 and 3 discuss the Conservation Element's connection to the goals of the state Growth Management Act and the Thurston County-Wide Planning Policies.

Chapter 4 presents each goal with an explanation of how to read the tables and then presents each of Tumwater's conservation goals in detail with an explanation of the importance of each goal.

Appendix A contains the draft implementation actions, which are intended to be a source of annual work program items that serve to

The goals and policies of the Conservation Element are guided by the state Growth Management Act and the Thurston County-Wide Planning Policies and the vision of a Tumwater that protects and enhances natural resources and the environment. The Element's goals and policies are coordinated with the other Elements and regional plans.

The Conservation Element's goals and policies are the policy basis for the draft implementation actions in Conservation Element and those future actions that will be developed over the next 20 years which will be the foundation for Tumwater's annual work programs to address natural resources and the environment.

Part 2 – Technical Information provides an analysis of natural resource lands appropriate to Tumwater and its critical areas to support the twenty-year growth projections for Tumwater.

implement the goals and policies of the Conservation Element.

The annual work programs will further refine the implementation actions prior to their being put into practice. It is expected that implementation actions will be further amended, added, or subtracted as needed over the course of the 20-year Comprehensive Plan as new opportunities arise to meet the intent of the Conservation Element's goals and policies.

Commented [BM1]: This will be the document that has the Comprehensive Plan wide goals and policies.

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2. Growth Management Act – Element Goals

Chapter 36.70A RCW requires that Tumwater show how the Conservation Element meets the relevant planning goals contained within the Act. The following is a listing of the two applicable goals for the Conservation Element and an analysis of how the Element addresses these goals:

8. Natural resource industries. *Maintain and enhance natural resource-based industries, including productive timber, agricultural, and fisheries industries. Encourage the conservation of productive forestlands and productive agricultural lands and discourage incompatible uses.*

The Conservation Element has specific guidelines and policies that ensure the viability of natural resource industries and activities. Additionally, the Conservation Element ensures the viability of natural resource industries in Tumwater through the identification of such lands in the Conservation Element text and maps.

While Tumwater has limited natural resource lands as defined by the Growth Management

Act, it does have mineral resources, forestry, and agriculture lands. Since these parcels are within Tumwater, it is difficult to determine their long-term significance. Tumwater supports urban agriculture with goals, policies, and implementation actions.

10. Environment. *Protect and enhance the environment and enhance the state's high quality of life, including air and water quality, and the availability of water.*

The state legislature updated the Growth Management Act environment goal in 2023 to require enhancement of the environment. The Conservation Element contains specific policies relating to air and water quality, water availability, and protection and preservation of critical areas and addresses how to enhance the environment.

If conflict occurs in the implementation of policy and development regulations, the priority of protecting critical areas will be superior to other uses of natural resources.

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3. County-Wide Planning Policies

The Growth Management Act requires that Tumwater’s Comprehensive Plan be consistent with Thurston County’s County-Wide Planning Policies, which were last amended in 2025.

The following is a list of the relevant policies that apply to this Element of the Comprehensive Plan. All County-Wide Planning Policies are adopted as Appendix B to the Comprehensive Plan. The relevant sections of the County-Wide Planning Policies to this Element are cited below.

II. Urban Growth Areas

The resource land and critical area chapters in the Element describe what kinds of development are compatible with the resource or area that chapter covers.

III. Promotion of Contiguous and Orderly Development, Provision of Urban Services, and Protection of Rural Areas

The critical aquifer recharge area policies in the Element support this policy.

VII. Economic Development and Employment

Urban agriculture is discussed in the Element. The critical areas chapters address the protection of crucial areas for both environmental and public health reasons.

X. Environmental Quality

The Conservation Element is based upon the theme of the importance of natural systems and resources to human uses. The portion of the Element related to water resources cover the issues surrounding the balance between meeting future needs for water and protecting water resources.

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4. Element Goals and Policies

A. How to Read These Tables

The Conservation Element’s goals and policies are not in priority order.

The Conservation Element’s goals and policies are associated with one of the three areas of conservation goals:

1. Overarching Environmental Goals
2. Natural Resource Areas Goals
3. Critical Areas Goals

Appendix A provides a list of the draft implementation actions by goal and policy that will be considered when developing annual work programs for implementing the Conservation Element’s goals and policies.

1) Department Leads

As noted in the tables below, implementation of the Conservation Element’s goals and policies are associated with four different Tumwater departments:

- CDD** Community Development Department
- PRD** Parks, Recreation, and Facilities Department
- TED** Transportation & Engineering Department
- WRS** Water Resources & Sustainability Department

2) Period

Each of the Conservation Element’s policies is associated with estimated start dates, length of time to complete, and target completion dates, if appropriate based on adequate funding for staff and resources. Most policies are ongoing with no set target completion date.

B. Overarching Environmental Goals

Goal C-1 Recognize the significant role played by natural features and systems in determining the overall environmental quality and livability of Tumwater.

Natural features and systems perform key environmental functions that enhance the livability of Tumwater and protects its residents from hazards.

Commented [BM2]: Old Goal C-1.

	Policies	Lead	Period
C-1.1	Support active measures to protect and enhance Tumwater’s natural environment	CDD	Term of Plan

Commented [BM3]: Modified old Policy C-1.1.

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Policies	Lead	Period
C-1.2 Use adopted plans to inform critical area policies, regulations, and implementation actions.	CDD WRS	Term of Plan

Commented [BM4]: New policy to replace current Policies C-1.3 and C-1.7.

Goal C-2 Promote conservation of natural resources and the protection of the environment in cooperation with residents, property owners, other jurisdictions, and tribes.

Natural resources are the building blocks to produce all the things we need. Some resources need Tumwater’s protection and management to ensure they can continue to provide materials and services into the future.

Human activity has a large impact on the environment, changing the way the landscape meets the needs of others. Collaboration is key to ensuring that everyone’s needs can be met in the future.

Policies	Lead	Period
C-2.1 Support education programs in the community that outline the need for natural resource conservation and protection of critical areas and create opportunities for community action.	CDD WRS	Term of Plan

Commented [BM5]: New policy.

C. Natural Resource Areas Goals

Goal C-3 Support urban agriculture for access to local food production.

Access to nutritious food is becoming more important as Tumwater residents face issues with the cost of living. Supporting urban agriculture like farmstands, community gardens, and urban farms helps provides residents with access to fresh locally grown products, decreases the cost of transporting goods, protects cultural heritage, and provides open space.

As goals and policies are developed which support urban agriculture, farmers have increased access to markets, as well as opportunities to diversify their products and services. These benefits help make farms more viable at a scale that is compatible with urban environments.

Policies		Lead	Period
C-3.1	Support local food production to maintain the quality of life and long-term sustainability of Tumwater.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-3.2	Work with community groups to support the continued viability of agriculture and encourage neighborhood and community support.	CDD	Term of Plan

Commented [BM6]: Modification of current Policy C-3.1.

Commented [BM7]: Modification of current Policy C-3.4.

Goal C-4 Support urban forestry.

Urban forestry is the care and management of the vegetation on public and private properties in Tumwater. It includes native plants and ornamental plants, understory, and canopy. Plants in Tumwater provide benefits to those who live, work, and play in the area.

Trees mitigate pollution, provide habitat for wildlife, sequester carbon, reduce stormwater

runoff, and provide socioeconomic and aesthetic benefits. Managing trees to ensure safety and avoiding conflicts with infrastructure is an important part of urban forestry practices. The City Council adopted the Tumwater Urban Forestry Management Plan in 2021 to guide code development and protect trees and improve public safety.

Policies		Lead	Period
C-4.1	Maximize retention of a healthy tree cover and native vegetation and encourage restoration, replacement, and enhancement of unhealthy trees and disturbed vegetation as recommended in the adopted <i>Tumwater Urban Forestry Management Plan</i> consistent with the Growth Management Act and the requirements of protected habitat.	WRS	Term of Plan
C-4.2	Ensure that harvesting for conversion to other uses occurs in a manner compatible with land uses of the surrounding area and maintenance of water quality and critical areas.	WRS CDD	Term of Plan

Commented [BM8]: Update of current Policy C-1.5.

Commented [BM9]: Update of current Policy C-3.5.

Goal C-5 Protect mineral resource lands.

Modern industry relies on mineral resources. The most abundant mineral resource in Washington State is aggregate which includes sand, gravel, and crushed rock. These products are vital to road construction and other projects

that require soil stabilization and additional drainage.

Local mineral sources are especially valuable since they reduce the shipping costs associated with transporting heavy materials. Since

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minerals are a non-renewable resource, protecting existing sources in Tumwater is important to ensure they are available locally into the future.

Policies	Lead	Period
C-5.1 Allow mineral extraction industries to locate where prime natural resource deposits exist and where extraction will not cause the degradation of sensitive areas.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-5.2 Conserve designated mineral resource lands of long-term commercial significance for mineral extraction, and the use of adjacent lands should not interfere with the continued use of the designated mining sites that are being operated in accordance with applicable best management practices and other laws and regulations.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-5.3 Restore mineral extraction sites as the site is being mined. The site should be restored for appropriate future use, and it should blend with the adjacent landscape and contours.	CDD	Term of Plan

Commented [BM10]: Current Policy C-3.6.

Commented [BM11]: Current Policy C-3.7.

Commented [BM12]: Current Policy C-3.8.

D. Critical Areas Goals

Goal C-6 Designate and protect critical areas including wetlands, critical aquifer recharge areas, frequently flooded areas, geologically hazardous areas, shorelines of the state, and fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas in accordance with the Growth Management Act to protect their functions and values as well as safeguard against threats to health, safety, and property.

Unwise development of critical areas jeopardizes environmental resource functions and values, puts species at risk of extinction, triggers regulatory burdens, and places people and property in unsafe conditions.

If critical area functions are not protected, attempting to enhance or restore them in the future is likely to be costly, if not impossible.

Policies	Lead	Period
C-6.1 Base critical areas designations and regulations on best available science to protect and enhance the functions and values of these areas.	CDD	Term of Plan

Commented [BM13]: Add tooltip to Comprehensive Plan glossary of terms.

Commented [BM14]: Updated current Policy C-2.1.

TMC 16.24.030 defines Critical aquifer recharge areas the same way the RCW defines it; could add this to the Comprehensive Plan glossary.

RCW states "Areas with a critical recharging effect on aquifers used for potable water."

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Policies	Lead	Period
C-6.2 Protect critical areas while allowing for compatible growth and development.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-6.3 Require that prior to any development, critical areas are identified and protected.	CDD	Term of Plan

Commented [BM15]: Update of current policy C-1.1.

Commented [BM16]: Current Policy C-2.3.

Goal C-7 Protect and enhance water quality.

Clean water is necessary for life. Everyday activities such as cleaning and driving can have a negative impact on water quality. Reducing the quantity of pollutants on Tumwater’s roads and yards decreases the likelihood that they will be washed into waterways or carried into groundwater.

Since most sources of pollution are all around Tumwater’s landscape, it is also important to maintain systems that can remove pollution from water.

Policies	Lead	Period
C-7.1 Protect water quality by preserving and enhancing the ecological functions of water features through land use plans, development regulations, and public education.	CDD WRS	Term of Plan
C-7.2 Support restoration of river and stream channels and associated wetland and riparian areas to enhance water quality, improve fish and wildlife habitat, and mitigate flooding and erosion.	CDD WRS	Term of Plan
C-7.3 Allow public access to wetlands, streams, and lakes for scientific, educational, and recreational use, provided access is carefully sited, sensitive habitats and species are protected, and hydrologic continuity is maintained.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-7.4 Manage water resources to preserve ecosystem services, while addressing fish and wildlife habitat, flood protection, water supply, recreation, and open space.	CDD PRD WRS	Term of Plan

Commented [BM17]: New policy.

Commented [BM18]: Update of current Policy C-2.6.

Commented [BM19]: Update of current Policy C-2.7.

Commented [BM20]: New policy.

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Policies	Lead	Period
C-7.5 Work with Olympia, Thurston County, and other affected entities to enhance and protect water quality in the region guided by the Deschutes River Study.	WRS	Term of Plan

Commented [BM21]: New policy.

Goal C-8 Improve natural drainage systems.

Storm and surface waters are a primary concern for urban environments. As impervious surfaces replace the permeable land cover, water travelling across the land accumulates pollutants. As development converts more land, less water is filtered through soil and more pollutants are accumulated.

Drainage systems are also critical to protect the built environment from flood damage. With extreme amounts of stormwater entering the stormwater system within short periods of time, it is imperative that Tumwater expand the system at the rate of land conversion to meet the ever-changing needs.

Policies	Lead	Period
C-8.1 Develop Watershed Management Plans in partnership with other jurisdictions who are also part of the same watershed.	WRS	Term of Plan
C-8.2 Develop and implement conservation measures necessary to preserve and enhance anadromous fish habitat and fisheries and other state and federally protected species, consistent with the Growth Management Act.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-8.3 Protect and enhance natural drainage systems to maintain and improve water quality and reduce public costs.	CDD WRS	Term of Plan
C-8.4 Prevent environmental degradation by using best management practices and current stormwater treatment and flow control standards on new and redevelopment projects.	CDD TED WRS	Term of Plan
C-8.5 Use current State approved stormwater treatment and flow control standards on development and construction projects.	CDD TED WRS	Term of Plan

Commented [BM22]: New policy.

Commented [BM23]: New policy.

Commented [BM24]: New policy.

Commented [BM25]: New policy.

Commented [BM26]: New policy.

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Policies	Lead	Period
C-8.6 Require resource industries to use management practices that prevent erosion and sedimentation and pollutants from entering ground or surface waters following State regulations.	CDD	Term of Plan

Commented [BM27]: New policy.

Goal C-9 Improve air quality.

Poor air quality can have serious impacts on health for both people and the environment. Ensuring that air is appropriately filtered by

retaining vegetation and reducing the amount of air pollution at the source are two strategies to manage air quality for the next 20 years.

Policies	Lead	Period
C-9.1 Continue to support and rely on the various State, federal, and local programs to protect and enhance air quality.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-9.2 Require appropriate tree and vegetation retention and landscaping to provide filtering of suspended particulates.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-9.3 Coordinate with the other Elements in the Comprehensive Plan on actions to reduce vehicle miles traveled, greenhouse gas emissions, and other locally generated air pollutants.	CDD WRS TED	Term of Plan

Commented [BM28]: New policy.

Commented [BM29]: New policy.

Commented [BM30]: New policy.

Goal C-10 Protect and enhance rivers, streams, and lakes.

Surface waters like rivers, streams and lakes provide necessary transit for water as it flows across the landscape. Measures to protect waterways mitigate erosion and pollution that are ubiquitous in urban areas.

Surface water also provides necessary habitat for wildlife. Protecting water quality is important for preserving Tumwater’s environments to continue the beneficial ecosystem functions necessary for life.

Policies	Lead	Period
C-10.1 Protect, enhance, and restore natural stream channels for their hydraulic, ecological, and aesthetic functions through development regulations; land dedications, easements, and acquisitions; incentives; and restoration planning.	CDD WRS	Term of Plan

Commented [BM31]: New policy.

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Policies	Lead	Period
C-10.2 Require any alteration of rivers, streams, and lakes include mitigation and maintenance which address water quality; floodplain protection; fish and wildlife habitat; channel stability and vegetative cover; maintenance of instream flows; and impacts to downstream property owners.	CDD	Term of Plan

Commented [BM32]: New policy.

Goal C-11 Protect and enhance wetlands.

Wetlands play a vital role in the overall natural environment. Wetlands protect water quality, reduce flooding, provide aquifer recharge for drinking water and other uses, and provide critical habitat for fish and wildlife as well as carbon sequestration.

Wetlands also provide many social values including recreational opportunities, aesthetic benefits, places for research and education, and cultural resources important to tribes.

Policies	Lead	Period
C-11.1 Where possible, protect wetlands as ecosystems that provide essential services and functionality within watersheds.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-11.2 Preserve and enhance wetlands from new developments by providing buffers around wetlands adequate to protect natural functions.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-11.3 Allow reasonable use of property containing existing wetlands to avoid a regulatory taking following State guidance.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-11.4 Maintain stormwater treatment and flow control sites associated with wetlands in a manner that ensures the ecological functions of the wetland to minimize impacts to critical area habitat.	CDD WRS	Term of Plan

Commented [BM33]: Update of current Policy C-2.8.

Commented [BM34]: New policy.

Commented [BM35]: New policy.

Commented [BM36]: New policy.

Goal C-12 Protect groundwater.

Tumwater’s water comes from underground aquifers, which are sand and gravel formations below the ground that "hold" water. These

aquifers are replenished by rain and snow infiltrated through the ground and filtered by the soil and trillions of microbes. The many layers of

Commented [BM37]: Update of current Policy C-2.9.

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soil, rock, and microbes that sit above the aquifers act to cleanse the water as it passes and helps prevent contamination from the surface. Groundwater contributes to the flow of streams

and rivers, providing base flows that are essential for fish and other aquatic life, especially during dry periods.

Policies	Lead	Period
C-12.1 Protect aquifers, aquifer recharge areas, and wellhead protection areas from contamination.	CDD WRS	Term of Plan
C-12.2 Protect streams, wetlands, and lakes that serve to recharge aquifers from contamination.	CDD WRS	Term of Plan

Commented [BM38]: New policy.

Commented [BM39]: New policy.

Goal C-13 Protect geologically hazardous areas.

Protecting geologically hazardous areas in Tumwater is important because they pose significant threats to public safety and infrastructure. Identifying these areas allows for

better planning, mitigation, and emergency response. Washington state is particularly more vulnerable due to its geological location, active faults, and volcanic activity.

Policies	Lead	Period
C-13.1 Regulate development intensity, site coverage, and vegetation removal in geologically hazardous areas to prevent property damage and environmental degradation; minimize soil erosion, siltation, and landslides; and enhance greenbelt and wildlife habitat values.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-13.2 Minimize soil disturbance and maximize retention and replacement of native vegetative cover, such as trees, for land use permitted in erosion and landslide hazard areas.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-13.3 Decrease development intensity as slopes increase to mitigate problems of drainage, erosion, siltation, and landslides.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-13.4 Require erosion and sedimentation prevention best management practices be used on construction projects by the Development Guide and Drainage Design & Erosion Control Manual.	CDD	Term of Plan

Commented [BM40]: Modification of current Policy C-2.13.

Commented [BM41]: Current Policy C-2.14.

Commented [BM42]: New policy.

Commented [BM43]: New policy.

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Policies	Lead	Period
C-13.5 Require appropriate engineering, building design, and construction measures to minimize the risk of structural damage and fire and injury to occupants, and to prevent post-seismic collapse in areas with severe seismic hazards.	CDD TED	Term of Plan

Commented [BM44]: Current Policy C-2.15.

Goal C-14 Preserve flood plains and floodways.

Floodplains are important for flood protection and ecosystems. Natural floodplains provide flood risk reduction benefits by slowing runoff, storing floodwater, and reducing erosion. Floodplains frequently contain wetlands and provide fish and wildlife habitats.

It is important to protect the functions of floodplains and reduce risk to people and property by limiting development in frequently flooded areas.

Policies	Lead	Period
C-14.1 Minimize land alterations that would increase potential flooding and changes to natural surface water features that retain or carry floodwaters, such as wetlands, floodplains, rivers, streams, and lakes.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-14.2 Require mitigation for adverse environmental impacts from engineered flood control measures.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-11.3 Meet state regulatory standards for floodplain development as these standards are updated for consistency with relevant federal requirements including those related to the Endangered Species Act.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-14.4 Emphasize non-structural methods in planning for flood prevention and damage reduction. Require new developments or land modifications in 100-year floodplains maintain natural flood storage functions and minimize hazards.	CDD	Term of Plan

Commented [BM45]: Current Policy C-2.10.

Commented [BM46]: Current Policy C-2.11.

Commented [BM47]: Current Policy C-2.12.

Commented [BM48]: New policy.

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Policies	Lead	Period
C-14.5 Protect 100-year floodplains by restricting development; encouraging low-impact uses such as open space, trails, and parks; locating infrastructure above the flood level, and requiring new development replace existing flood storage capacity lost due to filling.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-14.6 Restrict permanent structures within the floodway due to risks associated with deep and fast-flowing waters unless appropriate flood control measures have been taken.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-14.7 Restrict land uses in a floodway that would divert water from the floodway, change flood elevation or obstruct natural flow, unless appropriate flood control measures have been taken such that there are no additional offsite impacts and no degradation of water quality.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-14.8 Restrict development in the floodway fringe that would reduce the existing level of flood storage.	CDD	Term of Plan

Commented [BM49]: New policy.

Commented [BM50]: New policy.

Commented [BM51]: New policy.

Commented [BM52]: New policy.

Goal C-15 Protect and enhance wildlife habitat.

Wildlife habitats, such as prairies, provide essential resources for wildlife and humans. Resources include food, water, shelter, and breeding grounds, ensuring the continuation of diverse species and the health of ecosystems.

Protecting habitats also helps mitigate climate change, conserve biodiversity conservation, and provide health and economic benefits.

Wildlife habitat offers recreation opportunities for the community and has economic benefits as well. Integrating wildlife habitat protection into land use planning decisions can help minimize development impacts on wildlife populations.

Policies	Lead	Period
C-15.1 Identify, protect, and enhance fish and wildlife habitat corridors to minimize habitat fragmentation, especially along existing linkages by enhancing vegetation composition and structure and incorporating compatible indigenous plant species.	CDD	Term of Plan

Commented [BM53]: Modification of current Policy C-2.21.

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Policies	Lead	Period
C-15.2 Protect and preserve habitats for species identified as endangered, threatened, or sensitive by the State or federal government, giving special consideration to measures necessary to preserve or enhance suitable habitat.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-15.3 Maintain habitats that support the greatest diversity of fish and wildlife through conservation and enhancement of critical areas.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-15.4 When developing forested property adjacent to steep slopes, wetlands, stream ravines, or stream corridors, encourage development to provide additional buffer areas to provide wildlife and fish habitat.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-15.5 Restore native vegetation and control invasive species to preserve and enhance fish and wildlife habitat.	CDD	Term of Plan

Commented [BM54]: Modification of current Policy C-2.16.

Commented [BM55]: Current Policy C-2.17.

Commented [BM56]: New policy.

Commented [BM57]: New policy.

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Appendix A – Draft Implementation Actions

Each of the Conservation Element goals and policies in Chapter 4 will require Tumwater to take specific actions to implement over the course of the 20-year term of the Comprehensive Plan.

The draft implementation actions in the tables below were developed in coordination with the stakeholders, the community, and Tumwater staff. The draft implementation actions in the tables below are intended to serve as the start for developing annual Tumwater work programs to address conservation actions.

As the Comprehensive Plan is put into action over the next twenty years, the draft implementation actions will change as new, unforeseen opportunities emerge: new ones may be added, proposed ones may be modified or replaced by other actions.

The draft implementations actions below are intended to be draft work program items that serve to implement the goals and policies of the Element. The draft implementation actions will need further refinement before they are incorporated into annual Tumwater work programs.

1. How to Read These Tables

The Conservation Element goals, policies, and the draft implementation actions associated with them are not in priority order.

The draft implementation actions that can only be undertaken by other entities are not included in this plan.

The Conservation Element’s goals, policies, and draft implementation actions are associated with one of the three areas of conservation goals:

1. Overarching Environmental Goals
2. Natural Resource Areas Goals
3. Critical Areas Goals

1) Department Leads

As noted in the tables below, implementation of the Conservation Element’s policies and draft implementation actions are associated with four different Tumwater departments:

- CDD** Community Development Department
- PRD** Parks, Recreation, and Facilities Department
- TED** Transportation & Engineering Department
- WRS** Water Resources & Sustainability Department

2) Period

Each of the Conservation Element’s policies and draft implementation are associated with estimated start dates, length of time to complete, and target completion dates, if appropriate based on adequate funding for staff and resources. Most policies are ongoing with no set target completion date.

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2. Overarching Environmental Goals

Goal C-1 Recognize the significant role played by natural features and systems in determining the overall environmental quality and livability of Tumwater.

Policies and Implementation Actions		Lead	Period
C-1.1	Support active measures to protect and enhance Tumwater’s natural environment	CDD	Term of Plan
C-1.2	Use adopted plans to inform critical area policies, regulations, and implementation actions.	CDD WRS	Term of Plan
C-1.2.1	Implement the actions identified in the Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan.	CDD WRS	Term of Plan
C-1.2.2	Implement the actions identified in the most recent version of the Natural Hazards Mitigation Plan for Thurston County.	CDD WRS	Term of Plan
C-1.2.3	Implement the actions identified in the Tumwater Urban Forestry Management Plan.	CDD WRS	Term of Plan

Commented [BM58]: Old Goal C-1.

Commented [BM59]: Modified old Policy C-1.1.

Commented [BM60]: New policy to replace current Policies C-1.3 and C-1.7.

Commented [BM61]: Based on current Land Use policy.

Commented [BM62]: Based on current Land Use policy.

Commented [BM63]: Based on current Land Use policy.

Goal C-2 Promote conservation of natural resources and the protection of the environment in cooperation with residents, property owners, other jurisdictions, and tribes.

Policies and Implementation Actions		Lead	Period
C-2.1	Support education programs in the community that outline the need for natural resource conservation and protection of critical areas and create opportunities for community action.	CDD WRS	Term of Plan
C-2.1.1	Support the work of the Stream Team.	WRS	Term of Plan
C-2.1.2	Support the work for the Tumwater Green Team.	WRS	Term of Plan

Commented [BM64]: New policy.

Commented [BM65]: New implementation action.

Commented [BM66]: New implementation action.

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Policies and Implementation Actions		Lead	Period
C-2.1.3	Support water conservation messaging and outreach.	WRS	Term of Plan
C-2.1.4	Support water quality messaging and outreach for wellhead and source protection.	WRS	Term of Plan

Commented [BM67]: New implementation action.

Commented [BM68]: New implementation action.

3. Natural Resource Areas Goals

Goal C-3 Support urban agriculture for access to local food production.

Policies and Implementation Actions		Lead	Period
C-3.1	Support local food production to maintain the quality of life and long-term sustainability of Tumwater.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-3.1.1	Implement and keep the Food System Plan updated.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-3.1.2	Collaborate with local organizations to promote food system resources to improve participation.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-3.2	Work with community groups to support the continued viability of agriculture and encourage neighborhood and community support.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-3.2.1	Support the efforts of organizations to develop a vibrant food system through access to healthy, local, affordable, culturally appropriate, sustainably produced food to assist the community in having reliable access to enough affordable nutritious food.	CDD	Term of Plan

Commented [BM69]: Modification of current Policy C-3.1.

Commented [BM70]: New implementation action.

Commented [BM71]: New implementation action.

Commented [BM72]: Modification of current Policy C-3.4.

Commented [BM73]: Modification of current Implementation Action C-3.4.1.

Conservation Element

Part 1 – Goals, Policies, and Implementation Actions



Goal C-4 Support urban forestry.

Policies and Implementation Actions		Lead	Period
C-4.1	Maximize retention of a healthy tree cover and native vegetation and encourage restoration, replacement, and enhancement of unhealthy trees and disturbed vegetation as recommended in the adopted <i>Tumwater Urban Forestry Management Plan</i> consistent with the Growth Management Act and the requirements of protected habitat.	WRS	Term of Plan
C-4.1.1	Implement the actions in the Tumwater Urban Forestry Management Plan.	WRS	Term of Plan
C-4.2	Ensure that harvesting for conversion to other uses occurs in a manner compatible with land uses of the surrounding area and maintenance of water quality and critical areas.	WRS CDD	Term of Plan

Commented [BM74]: Update of current Policy C-1.5.

Commented [BM75]: New implementation action.

Commented [BM76]: Update of current Policy C-3.5.

Goal C-5 Protect mineral resource lands.

Policies and Implementation Actions		Lead	Period
C-5.1	Allow mineral extraction industries to locate where prime natural resource deposits exist and where extraction will not cause the degradation of sensitive areas.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-5.2	Conserve designated mineral resource lands of long-term commercial significance for mineral extraction, and the use of adjacent lands should not interfere with the continued use of the designated mining sites that are being operated in accordance with applicable best management practices and other laws and regulations.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-5.3	Restore mineral extraction sites as the site is being mined. The site should be restored for appropriate future use, and it should blend with the adjacent landscape and contours.	CDD	Term of Plan

Commented [BM77]: Current Policy C-3.6.

Commented [BM78]: Current Policy C-3.7.

Commented [BM79]: Current Policy C-3.8.

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Part 1 – Goals, Policies, and Implementation Actions



4. Critical Areas Goals

Goal C-6 Designate and protect critical areas including wetlands, critical aquifer recharge areas, frequently flooded areas, geologically hazardous areas, shorelines of the state, and fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas in accordance with the Growth Management Act to protect their functions and values as well as safeguard against threats to health, safety, and property.

Policies and Implementation Actions		Lead	Period
C-6.1	Base critical areas designations and regulations on best available science to protect and enhance the functions and values of these areas.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-6.1.1	Update critical area regulations as needed to reflect current best available science and state guidance to minimize impacts from new development.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-6.2	Protect critical areas while allowing for compatible growth and development.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-6.2.1	When updating development regulations, review in conjunction with critical areas regulations to ensure compatibility.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-6.2.2	Use incentive programs, acquisition, appropriate regulations, and other techniques to preserve critical areas as permanent open space where development may pose hazards to health, property, or important ecological functions.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-6.2.3	Apply mitigation sequencing to avoid and minimize impacts to critical areas, and, if necessary, require and enforce mitigation to ensure no net loss of critical area functions.	CDD	Term of Plan

Commented [BM80]: Add tooltip to Comprehensive Plan glossary of terms.

Commented [BM81]: Updated current Policy C-2.1. TMC 16.24.030 defines Critical aquifer recharge areas the same way the RCW defines it; could add this to the Comprehensive Plan glossary.

RCW states "Areas with a critical recharging effect on aquifers used for potable water."

Commented [BM82]: New implementation action.

Commented [BM83]: Update of current policy C-1.1.

Commented [BM84]: New implementation action.

Commented [BM85]: New implementation action based on current Policy C-2.2.

Commented [BM86]: Add tooltip to Comprehensive Plan glossary of terms.

Commented [BM87]: New implementation action based on current Policy C-2.5.

Commented [BM88]: New implementation action based on current Policy C-2.5.

Conservation Element

Part 1 – Goals, Policies, and Implementation Actions



Policies and Implementation Actions		Lead	Period
C-6.2.4	Ensure the effectiveness of critical area mitigation by requiring adequate critical area studies and mitigation plans, the application of mitigation sequencing, financial assurances to ensure mitigation success, and by improving Tumwater oversight of maintenance and monitoring of mitigation.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-6.3	Require that prior to any development, critical areas are identified and protected.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-6.3.1	In reviewing development proposals that may impact a critical area, supplement staff review with a qualified third-party professional as needed to assess potential impacts and require development alternatives or mitigation.	CDD	Term of Plan

Commented [BM89]: New implementation action based on current Policy C-2.4.

Commented [BM90]: Current Policy C-2.3.

Commented [BM91]: New implementation action.

Goal C-7 Protect and enhance water quality.

Policies and Implementation Actions		Lead	Period
C-7.1	Protect water quality by preserving and enhancing the ecological functions of water features through land use plans, development regulations, and public education.	CDD WRS	Term of Plan
C-7.1.1	Require adequate stormwater treatment and flow control for new development, including low impact development techniques.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-7.1.2	Update stormwater regulations as needed to reflect current state guidance, including low impact development provisions.	CDD WRS	Term of Plan
C-7.1.3	Support water quality messaging and outreach for wellhead and source protection.	WRS	Term of Plan

Commented [BM92]: New policy.

Commented [BM93]: New implementation action.

Commented [BM94]: New implementation action.

Conservation Element

Part 1 – Goals, Policies, and Implementation Actions



Policies and Implementation Actions		Lead	Period
C-7.2	Support restoration of river and stream channels and associated wetland and riparian areas to enhance water quality, improve fish and wildlife habitat, and mitigate flooding and erosion.	CDD WRS	Term of Plan
C-7.3	Allow public access to wetlands, streams, and lakes for scientific, educational, and recreational use, provided access is carefully sited, sensitive habitats and species are protected, and hydrologic continuity is maintained.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-7.3.1	Work with the Tumwater and Olympia School Districts, LOTT, and other community-based organizations on public education on maintaining water quality.	WRS	Term of Plan
C-7.4	Manage water resources to preserve ecosystem services, while addressing fish and wildlife habitat, flood protection, water supply, recreation, and open space.	CDD PRD WRS	Term of Plan
C-7.4.1	Update the Salmon Creek Basin Plan.	CDD TED WRS	Term of Plan
C-7.4.2	Monitor storm drain outfalls on a regular basis and pursue corrective actions, as necessary.	WRS	Term of Plan
C-7.5	Work with Olympia, Thurston County, and other affected entities to enhance and protect water quality in the region guided by the Deschutes River Study.	WRS	Term of Plan
C-7.5.1	Coordinate implementation strategies and regulations with Olympia and Thurston County.	CDD TED WRS	Term of Plan

Commented [BM95]: Update of current Policy C-2.6.

Commented [BM96]: Update of current Policy C-2.7.

Commented [BM97]: New implementation action.

Commented [BM98]: New policy.

Commented [BM99]: New implementation action.

Commented [BM100]: New implementation action.

Commented [BM101]: New policy.

Commented [BM102]: New implementation action.

Goal C-8 Improve natural drainage systems.

Policies and Implementation Actions		Lead	Period
C-8.1	Develop Watershed Management Plans in partnership with other jurisdictions who are also part of the same watershed.	WRS	Term of Plan

Commented [BM103]: New policy.

Conservation Element

Part 1 – Goals, Policies, and Implementation Actions



Policies and Implementation Actions		Lead	Period	
C-8.1.1	Work with Olympia and Thurston County to ensure that regulations regarding surface water management provide consistent surface water management.	WRS	Term of Plan	Commented [BM104]: New implementation action.
C-8.1.2	Continue involvement with watershed planning efforts through participation in the Salmon Creek Basin and WRIA 13 watershed planning efforts.	WRS	Term of Plan	Commented [BM105]: New implementation action.
C-8.2	Develop and implement conservation measures necessary to preserve and enhance anadromous fish habitat and other state and federally protected species, consistent with the Growth Management Act.	CDD	Term of Plan	Commented [BM106]: New policy.
C-8.3	Protect and enhance natural drainage systems to maintain and improve water quality and reduce public costs.	CDD WRS	Term of Plan	Commented [BM107]: New policy.
C-8.4	Prevent environmental degradation by using best management practices and current stormwater treatment and flow control standards on new and redevelopment projects.	CDD TED WRS	Term of Plan	Commented [BM108]: New policy.
C-8.5	Use current State approved stormwater treatment and flow control standards on development and construction projects.	CDD TED WRS	Term of Plan	Commented [BM109]: New policy.
C-8.5.1	Update stormwater regulations as needed to reflect current best available science and state guidance.	CDD TED WRS	Term of Plan	Commented [BM110]: New implementation action.
C-8.6	Require resource industries to use management practices that prevent erosion and sedimentation and pollutants from entering ground or surface waters following State regulations.	CDD	Term of Plan	Commented [BM111]: New policy.
C-8.6.1	Update regulations as needed to meet state standards to minimize the amount of erosion, sedimentation, and water pollutants created by resource industries.	CDD	Term of Plan	Commented [BM112]: New implementation action.

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Part 1 – Goals, Policies, and Implementation Actions



Goal C-9 Improve air quality.

Policies and Implementation Actions		Lead	Period
C-9.1	Continue to support and rely on the various State, federal, and local programs to protect and enhance air quality.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-9.1.1	Work with the Olympic Region Clean Air Agency and with Federal and State agencies to ensure that air quality is improved and protected within Tumwater.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-9.2	Require appropriate tree and vegetation retention and landscaping to provide filtering of suspended particulates.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-9.2.1	Update regulations as needed to reflect the current best available science and state guidance that allow the use of existing vegetated areas for biofiltration.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-9.3	Coordinate with the other Elements in the Comprehensive Plan on actions to reduce vehicle miles traveled, greenhouse gas emissions, and other locally generated air pollutants.	CDD WRS TED	Term of Plan

Commented [BM113]: New policy.

Commented [BM114]: New implementation action.

Commented [BM115]: New policy.

Commented [BM116]: New implementation action.

Commented [BM117]: New policy.

Goal C-10 Protect and enhance rivers, streams, and lakes.

Policies and Implementation Actions		Lead	Period
C-10.1	Protect, enhance, and restore natural stream channels for their hydraulic, ecological, and aesthetic functions through development regulations; land dedications, easements, and acquisitions; incentives; and restoration planning.	CDD WRS	Term of Plan
C-10.2	Require any alteration of rivers, streams, and lakes include mitigation and maintenance which address water quality; floodplain protection; fish and wildlife habitat; channel stability and vegetative cover; maintenance of instream flows; and impacts to downstream property owners.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-10.2.1	Rehabilitate degraded river and stream channels and banks using public and private programs, where conditions permit.	CDD WRS	Term of Plan

Commented [BM118]: New policy.

Commented [BM119]: New policy.

Commented [BM120]: New implementation action.

Conservation Element

Part 1 – Goals, Policies, and Implementation Actions



Policies and Implementation Actions	Lead	Period
C-10.2.2 Work with tribes, nonprofit organizations, and other public agencies to implement programs to rehabilitate rivers, streams, and lakes.	WRS	Term of Plan

Commented [BM121]: New implementation action.

Goal C-11 Protect and enhance wetlands.

Policies and Implementation Actions	Lead	Period
C-11.1 Where possible, protect wetlands as ecosystems that provide essential services and functionality within watersheds.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-11.2 Preserve and enhance wetlands from new developments by providing buffers around wetlands adequate to protect natural functions.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-11.3 Allow reasonable use of property containing existing wetlands to avoid a regulatory taking following State guidance.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-11.4 Maintain stormwater treatment and flow control sites associated with wetlands in a manner that ensures the ecological functions of the wetland to minimize impacts to critical area habitat.	CDD WRS	Term of Plan
C-11.4.1 Ensure the water level fluctuations within wetland areas due to stormwater treatment and flow control objectives are maintained like natural conditions as part of new development.	CDD WRS	Term of Plan

Commented [BM122]: Update of current Policy C-2.8.

Commented [BM123]: New policy.

Commented [BM124]: New policy.

Commented [BM125]: New policy.

Commented [BM126]: New implementation action.

Goal C-12 Protect groundwater.

Policies and Implementation Actions	Lead	Period
C-12.1 Protect aquifers, aquifer recharge areas, and wellhead protection areas from contamination.	CDD WRS	Term of Plan

Commented [BM127]: Update of current Policy C-2.9.

Commented [BM128]: New policy.

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Policies and Implementation Actions	Lead	Period
C-12.1.1 Work with the State Department of Ecology and others to update the delineation of aquifer recharge areas and regulations.	CDD WRS	Term of Plan
C-12.1.2 Update the wellhead protection plan as new source locations are considered or implemented.	WRS	Term of Plan
C-12.2 Protect streams, wetlands, and lakes that serve to recharge aquifers from contamination.	CDD WRS	Term of Plan

Commented [BM129]: New implementation action.

Commented [BM130]: New policy.

Goal C-13 Protect geologically hazardous areas.

Policies and Implementation Actions	Lead	Period
C-13.1 Regulate development intensity, site coverage, and vegetation removal in geologically hazardous areas to prevent property damage and environmental degradation; minimize soil erosion, siltation, and landslides; and enhance greenbelt and wildlife habitat values.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-13.2 Minimize soil disturbance and maximize retention and replacement of native vegetative cover, such as trees, for land use permitted in erosion and landslide hazard areas.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-13.3 Decrease development intensity as slopes increase to mitigate problems of drainage, erosion, siltation, and landslides.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-13.4 Require contractors to use erosion and sedimentation prevention best management practices on construction projects by the Development Guide and Drainage Design & Erosion Control Manual.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-13.5 Require appropriate engineering, building design, and construction measures to minimize the risk of structural damage and fire and injury to occupants, and to prevent post-seismic collapse in areas with severe seismic hazards.	CDD TED	Term of Plan

Commented [BM131]: Modification of current Policy C-2.13.

Commented [BM132]: Current Policy C-2.14.

Commented [BM133]: New policy.

Commented [BM134]: New policy.

Commented [BM135]: Current Policy C-2.15.

Conservation Element

Part 1 – Goals, Policies, and Implementation Actions



Policies and Implementation Actions	Lead	Period
C-13.5.1 Update building and fire codes as needed to reflect current state standards to account for the severity and frequency of seismic activity in the south Puget Sound area.	CDD	Term of Plan

Commented [BM136]: New implementation action.

Goal C-14 Preserve flood plains and floodways.

Policies and Implementation Actions	Lead	Period
C-14.1 Minimize land alterations that would increase potential flooding and changes to natural surface water features that retain or carry floodwaters, such as wetlands, floodplains, rivers, streams, and lakes.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-14.2 Require mitigation for adverse environmental impacts from engineered flood control measures.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-14.2.1 Prior to authorizing engineered flood control measures, encourage non-structural methods of flood control utilizing best available science.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-14.3 Meet state regulatory standards for floodplain development as these standards are updated for consistency with relevant federal requirements including those related to the Endangered Species Act.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-14.4 Emphasize non-structural methods in planning for flood prevention and damage reduction. Require new developments or land modifications in 100-year floodplains maintain natural flood storage functions and minimize hazards.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-14.5 Protect 100-year floodplains by restricting development; encouraging low-impact uses such as open space, trails, and parks; locating infrastructure above the flood level, and requiring new development replace existing flood storage capacity lost due to filling.	CDD	Term of Plan

Commented [BM137]: Current Policy C-2.10.

Commented [BM138]: Current Policy C-2.11.

Commented [BM139]: New implementation action.

Commented [BM140]: Current Policy C-2.12.

Commented [BM141]: New policy.

Commented [BM142]: New policy.

Conservation Element

Part 1 – Goals, Policies, and Implementation Actions



Policies and Implementation Actions	Lead	Period
C-14.5.1 Update regulations as needed to reduce development in floodplains following Federal Emergency Management Agency standards.	CDD	Every five years. Next update 2028.
C-14.6 Restrict permanent structures within the floodway due to risks associated with deep and fast-flowing waters unless appropriate flood control measures have been taken.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-14.7 Restrict land uses in a floodway that would divert water from the floodway, change flood elevation or obstruct natural flow, unless appropriate flood control measures have been taken such that there are no additional offsite impacts and no degradation of water quality.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-14.8 Restrict development in the floodway fringe that would reduce the existing level of flood storage.	CDD	Term of Plan

Commented [BM143]: New implementation action.

Commented [BM144]: New policy.

Commented [BM145]: New policy.

Commented [BM146]: New policy.

Goal C-15 Protect and enhance wildlife habitat.

Policies and Implementation Actions	Lead	Period
C-15.1 Identify, protect, and enhance fish and wildlife habitat corridors to minimize habitat fragmentation, especially along existing linkages by enhancing vegetation composition and structure and incorporating compatible indigenous plant species.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-15.2 Protect and preserve habitats for species identified as endangered, threatened, or sensitive by the State or federal government, giving special consideration to measures necessary to preserve or enhance suitable habitat.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-15.2.1 Implement salmon habitat protection and restoration priorities in approved Water Resource Inventory Area 13 and 23 plans.	CDD WRS	Term of Plan

Commented [BM147]: Modification of current Policy C-2.21.

Commented [BM148]: Modification of current Policy C-2.16.

Commented [BM149]: New implementation action from current Policy C-2.118.

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Part 1 – Goals, Policies, and Implementation Actions



Policies and Implementation Actions		Lead	Period
C-15.2.2	Implement suitable habitat protections and restoration priorities for threatened and endangered aquatic and terrestrial plant and animal species.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-15.2.3	Complete and implement the Bush Prairie Habitat Conservation Plan.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-15.3	Maintain habitats that support the greatest diversity of fish and wildlife through conservation and enhancement of critical areas.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-15.3.1	Coordinate with adjacent jurisdictions and tribes to identify, protect, and develop enhancement plans and actions for habitat networks and wetlands that cross jurisdictional lines.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-15.3.2	Promote the enhancement or restoration of streams, rivers, lakes, and wetlands as adjacent development activities occur.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-15.4	When developing forested property adjacent to steep slopes, wetlands, stream ravines, or stream corridors, encourage development to provide additional buffer areas to provide wildlife and fish habitat.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-15.5	Restore native vegetation and control invasive species to preserve and enhance fish and wildlife habitat.	CDD	Term of Plan
C-15.5.1	Develop regulations requiring all new developments to remove invasive plants and use native vegetation in restoration of buffers around wetlands, streams, creeks, and steep slope areas.	CDD	Term of Plan

Commented [BM150]: New implementation action.

Commented [BM151]: New implementation action.

Commented [BM152]: Current Policy C-2.17.

Commented [BM153]: New implementation action based on current Policy C-2.19.

Commented [BM154]: New implementation action.

Commented [BM155]: New policy.

Commented [BM156]: New policy.

Commented [BM157]: New implementation action.