Conservation Element Review for the City of Tumwater's 2025 Comprehensive Plan Update

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

Planning Commission – October 24, 2023

Intent

- Discuss Growth Management Act Conservation Goals
- Present the current version of the Conservation Element
- Consider specific issues for the Conservation Element
- Consider how to incorporate diversity, equity, and inclusion throughout
- Discuss state guidance materials

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Growth Management Act Conservation Goals

- ***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.*

- ***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.* [Updated in 2023]

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2016 Conservation Element

Addressed natural resource lands such as:

- Agricultural, forestry and mineral lands
- Critical areas (wetlands, aquifer recharge areas, frequently flooded areas, geologically hazardous areas and fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas)
- Incorporated best available science

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2025 Topics to Address as Part of the Update

Conservation Element:

- Update all maps to use current data
- Discuss how habitat conservation plans are used for the effective management of affected listed species and prairie eco-systems across private and public lands in the City.
- Update policies to designate and protect critical areas including wetlands, fish and wildlife habitat protection areas, frequently flooded areas, critical aquifer recharge areas, and geologically hazardous areas using best available science.
- Review greenhouse gas emission targets in the Conservation Element to address HB 2311 as part of Planning Commission's 2022 Comprehensive Plan amendment cycle recommendations (reference Climate Element).
- Add references to the updated Shoreline Master Program, Thurston Climate Mitigation Plan, and Urban Forestry Management Plan

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New Requirement: Incorporate Environmental Justice

Special consideration for environmental justice in goals and policies (E2SHB 1181)

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Structure of Current Conservation Element

1. Introduction
    - 1.1 Background
    - 1.2 Best Available Science
    - 1.3 Shorelines
    - 1.4 County-Wide Planning Policies
    - 1.5 Sustainable Thurston Policies

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Structure of Current Conservation Element

2. Agricultural Lands

- 2.1 Introduction
- 2.2 Sustainable Urban Agriculture
- 2.3 Agricultural Lands Classification
- 2.4 Agricultural Lands Conservation
- 2.5 Agricultural Lands Identification
- 2.6 Agricultural Lands Protection
- 2.7 Regulatory Barrier Assessment

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Structure of Current Conservation Element

3. Forest Lands

   3.1 Introduction

   3.2 Forest Lands Identification

   3.3 Forest Lands Conservation

   3.4 Forest Land Identification

   3.5 Forest Lands - Long Term Urbanization

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Structure of Current Conservation Element

4. Mineral Resource Lands

   4.1 Introduction

   4.2 Mineral Resource Lands Classification

   4.3 Mineral Resource Lands Identification

   4.4 Mineral Resource Lands Protection

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Structure of Current Conservation Element

5. Wetland Areas
   - 5.1 Introduction
   - 5.2 Existing Wetland Policies, Regulations, and Inventories
   - 5.3 Wetland Values and Benefits
   - 5.4 Wetland Protection Areas Classification
   - 5.5 Wetlands Identification
   - 5.6 Wetland Protection Techniques
   - 5.7 Wetlands Protection
   - 5.8 Wetland Tracking

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Structure of Current Conservation Element

6. Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas
   - 6.1 Introduction
   - 6.2 Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas Classification
   - 6.3 Critical Aquifer Protection Concerns
   - 6.4 Critical Aquifer Protection Techniques
   - 6.5 Critical Aquifer Vulnerability and Protection
   - 6.6 Critical Aquifer Protection

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Structure of Current Conservation Element

7. Frequently Flooded Areas
   - 7.1 Introduction
   - 7.2 Frequently Flooded Areas Classification
   - 7.3 Frequently Flooded Areas Concerns
   - 7.4 Frequently Flooded Areas Protection Techniques
   - 7.5 Frequently Flooded Areas Protection
   - 7.6 Salmon Creek Groundwater Flooding

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Structure of Current Conservation Element

8. Geologically Hazardous Areas
   - 8.1 Introduction
   - 8.2 Geologically Hazardous Areas Classification
   - 8.3 Geologically Hazardous Areas Identification
   - 8.4 Geologically Hazardous Areas in Tumwater
     - 8.4.1 Erosion (Known or Suspected Risk Category)
     - 8.4.2 Landslides (Known or Suspected Risk Category)
     - 8.4.3 Earthquakes (Known or Suspected Risk Category)
     - 8.4.4 Volcanic Hazards (No Risk Category)
   - 8.5 Development within Geologically Hazardous Areas

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Structure of Current Conservation Element

9. Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas
   - 9.1 Introduction
   - 9.2 Fish and Wildlife Habitat Classification
   - 9.3 Fish and Wildlife Habitat Protection Techniques
   - 9.4 Fish and Wildlife Habitat Identification in Tumwater
   - 9.5 Sensitive Species Identification in Tumwater
   - 9.6 Fish and Wildlife Habitat Protection in Tumwater
   - 9.7 Threatened and Endangered Species
10. Conservation Goals, Policies, and Actions
   - 10.1 Introduction
   - 10.2 Conservation Goals, Policies, and Actions

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Structure of Current Conservation Element

Conservation Maps

A. Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas Map

B. Forestry Lands Designation Map

C. Frequently Flooded Areas Map

D. Geologically Hazardous Areas Map

E. Mineral Resource Lands Map

F. Shorelines of the State Map

G. Wetlands Map

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Current Conservation Element

Link to current Conservation Element:

https://www.ci.tumwater.wa.us/home/showpublisheddocument/23406/637719658040630000

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Commerce Conservation Guidance Materials

- Critical Areas Checklist (2023)
- Riparian Management Zone Checklist (April 2023)
- Critical Areas Handbook
- Priority Habitats and Species List (Updated June 2023)
- Wetland Guidance for Critical Areas Ordinance Updates (October 2022)

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Next Steps

- Staff complete Gap Analysis November 2023
- General Government Committee briefing November 8, 2023

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Comments and Contact information

Written comments are welcome at any time during the periodic update process and staff will address and publish all formal comments

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- The periodic update email is compplan@ci.tumwater.wa.us
- All documents related to the periodic update will be located on the City's periodic update webpage

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