

OMC Chapter 18.32 as approved by City Council Aug 16, 2016, with proposed new language shown in track changes.

18.32.300 Important Habitats and Species - Purpose and Intent

In order to preserve and protect important habitats and species which are known to occur in Thurston County and which may be found within the City of Olympia, and which are not already protected by another critical area category, appropriate protection of an important habitat or species location shall be subject to the standards in OMC 18.32.305 through OMC 18.32.330. Protection in lake and marine shorelines is regulated under the City of Olympia Shoreline Master Program, OMC ~~14.08~~18.20.

18.32.305 Important Habitats and Species - Applicability and Definition

"Important habitats and species" are habitats or species known to occur within Thurston County and which may be found within the City of Olympia and which are not receiving habitat protection by another critical area category (e.g. Streams, Wetlands, or Landslide Hazard Areas) in this Chapter and:

- A. Are designated as endangered or threatened species identified under the Endangered Species Act; or
- B. Are state priority species identified on the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) Priority Habitats and Species (PHS) List and their habitats of primary association. (Consult the state WDFW for the current PHS list); or

C. Are designated as "locally important habitat or species" pursuant to OMC 18.32.327; or

CD. Are areas in Olympia that serve a critical role in sustaining needed habitats and species for the functional integrity of the ecosystem, and which, if altered, may reduce the likelihood that the species will persist over the long term. These areas may include, but are not limited to, rare or vulnerable ecological systems, communities, and habitat or habitat elements including seasonal ranges, breeding habitat, winter range, and movement corridors; and areas with high relative population density or species richness.

DE. Small lakes, defined as naturally existing bodies of standing water less than twenty acres in size that exist on a year-round basis in a depression of land or expanded part of a stream and not defined as "Shorelines of the State" by RCW 90.58 (Shoreline Management Act), are considered an "important habitat." This term does not apply to constructed ponds.

18.32.315 Important Habitats and Species - Authority

A. No development shall be allowed in an important habitat and species area ~~where local, state or federally endangered, threatened or sensitive species have a primary association as defined in OMC 18.32.305~~ without approval from the Department. The Department may restrict the uses and activities of a development proposal, such as

construction restrictions during breeding season, which lie when the proposal is located within one thousand (1,000) feet of an important habitat or species location.

B. The minimum performance standards that apply to a development proposal shall be those provided by the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife's Management Recommendations for Washington's Priority Habitat and Species (1991), as amended, and the requirements in OMC 18.32.115, except as modified on the basis of an Important Habitat and Species Management Plan described in OMC 18.32.330.

18.32.320 Important Habitats and Species - Buffers

The Department shall establish buffers for the habitat or species on a case-by-case basis, in consultation with the WDFW or others with expertise if needed, based on the critical area report outlined in OMC 18.32.115 and the WDFW management recommendations for Washington's priority habitats and species, if available. The buffers shall reflect the sensitivity of the specific habitat(s) and/or species to be protected.

18.32.325 Process to Identify Additional Locally Important Habitat and Species.

A. Additional species of local importance may be designated pursuant to OMC 18.58, zoning text amendment.

B. In addition to the decision criteria of OMC 18.59.050, a species may be designated locally important only if it demonstrates the following characteristics:

1. Local populations of native species are in danger of extirpation based on existing trends and best available science:

a. Local populations of native species that are likely to become endangered; or

b. Local populations of native species that are vulnerable or declining;

2. The species or habitat has recreation, commercial, game, tribal, or other special value;

3. Long-term persistence of a species is dependent on the protection of the species through the provisions of this part;

4. Protection by other county, state, or federal policies, laws, regulations, or nonregulatory tools is not adequate to prevent degradation of the species or habitat in the City; and

5. Without protection, there is a likelihood that the species or habitat will be diminished over the long term.

C. Effect of Designation. Designation of a species of local importance under this section shall not impact projects or proposals with a vested application or approved permit.

18.32.327 Locally Important Habitat and Species – Definitions and Performance Standards

Great Blue Heron Rookeries

A. Definitions

1. Great Blue Heron Nesting Season means February 1 through August 31.
2. Great Blue Heron Nesting Colony means the area inside the line created when the outermost nesting trees are connected. This line is the nesting colony boundary of two or more nests.
3. Great Blue Heron Core Zone means the area consisting of the great blue heron nesting colony and the year-round buffer.
4. Great Blue Heron Management Area means the area consisting of a great blue heron nesting colony, the year-round buffer, and the seasonal buffer.
5. Screening Tree means a tree that is within a direct line of sight between structures or development and the nesting area, and/or a tree that blocks the visibility of the nesting colony from structures or development during any part of the year, and within the great blue heron management area.

B. Buffers and Measurements

1. The year-round buffer is 200 feet, measured from the nesting colony boundary.
2. The seasonal buffer is an additional 300 feet, measured from the great blue heron core zone boundary.
3. Great Blue Heron Pre-nesting Area means an area less than 1 kilometer (.62 miles) from a great blue heron nesting colony where male birds congregate prior to occupying the nests.

C. Development Conditions Within the Great Blue Heron Core Zone

1. No development shall occur in the great blue heron nesting colony.
2. Any development within the year-round buffer shall use mitigation sequencing as provided in OMC 18.32.135 to:
 - a. maintain baseline development conditions and ambient noise levels;
 - b. maintain great blue heron habitat features and processes and provide mitigation for any loss of heron habitat features and processes; and shall

- c. include an implementation plan for both the development and any required mitigation with maps, as-built drawings, vegetation removal and planting, timing, and an operation and maintenance plan for businesses that include outside operations.
3. If the parcel where the development will occur abuts a parcel containing a great blue heron nesting colony, there shall be a minimum 30 foot building setback from the property line(s) closest to the nesting colony. The setback shall be vegetated using native trees and shrubs that screen activities on the parcel from the nesting colony.
4. If a nesting colony has been abandoned by a great blue heron colony, the great blue heron management core zone for this colony shall be protected for a period of ten years from the last known active nesting season.

D. Development Conditions Within the Great Blue Heron Management Area

1. Any clearing, grading, outside construction or other activity that causes loud noise above ambient noise levels shall be done from September 1 through January 31, outside of the nesting season. Ambient noise is specific to the location of the nesting colony site and can include noises such as sirens and leaf blowers. Noise that is not considered ambient noise includes but is not limited to outdoor construction and the use of dump trucks, front end loaders, pile drivers and blasting equipment.
2. All 6 inch diameter breast height (dbh) or larger trees shall be retained if the removal of those trees decreases the effectiveness of the trees' screening of new and existing development from the colony and if replacing the removed trees with other trees does not screen the nesting colony to the same extent as the existing trees.

18.32.330 Important Habitats and Species - Management Plan

When a development proposal lies within an important habitats and/or species location, an Important Habitats and Species Management Plan shall be submitted by the applicant. The Department may waive the submittal when consultation with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife staff indicates that such a plan is not needed.

An Important Habitats and Species Management Plan shall:

- A. Identify how the development impacts from the proposed project will be mitigated. The Washington Department of Wildlife Priority Habitat and Species Management Recommendations (1991), as amended, shall be the basis for this plan.

B. Be prepared by a person who demonstrates sufficient experience and education as a wildlife biologist, habitat management consultant or botanist.

C. Contain, but not be limited to:

1. A description of the nature, density and intensity of the proposed development in sufficient detail to allow analysis of such land use change upon the important species and its habitat;
2. An analysis of the effect of the proposed development, activity or land use change upon the important species and its habitat, based upon Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife management guidelines;
3. A mitigation plan by the applicant which shall explain how any adverse impacts to the important species or its habitat created by the development will be minimized or avoided, such as:
 - a. Establishment of buffer zones;
 - b. Preservation of important plants and trees;
 - c. Limitation of access;
 - d. Seasonal restriction of construction and other activities; and
 - e. Provisions for periodic review of the plan.

and

4. A map(s) to-scale, showing:
 - a. The location of the proposed development site, to include a boundary survey;
 - b. The relationship of the site to surrounding topographic features;
 - c. The nature and density of the proposed development or land use change;
 - d. Proposed building locations and arrangements;
 - e. Existing structures and landscape features including the name and location of all streams, ponds and other bodies of water;
 - f. The extent and location of the important species habitat;
 - g. A legend with: Title, scale and north arrows, and date, including revision dates if applicable.