

Critical Areas Ordinance Update

Staff, community members, and Council have all brought forward emerging issues or topics of interest for possible inclusion in the scope of the Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) update. One example is the protection of locally important species and their associated habitat, such as the Great Blue Heron and Oregon white oak.

Described below are three potential approaches for including locally important species and habitat in the scope of the update to the CAO. Also identified for each approach is the anticipated impact on the timeline and resources needed to complete the work.

Possible Approaches to Including Locally Important Species and Habitat in the CAO Update		
Option A: The Process Approach	Estimated Completion	Resources Needed*
Develop a process that would allow any interested person or group to nominate a locally important species and their associated habitat for protection in the CAO.	June 2016	No additional resources needed to adopt a nomination process. Depending on the adopted process, additional resources may be needed to evaluate individual nominations
Option B: The Species Approach		
Identify a short list of species based on current WA Department of Fish and Wildlife recommendations and update the CAO to protect those species and their associated habitat.	Fall/Winter 2016	Additional resources needed
Option C: The Habitat Approach		
Conduct a citywide species and habitat analysis to identify strategies, policies, and regulations for protecting locally important species and/or habitat.	Summer 2017	Significant additional resources needed

**Additional resources beyond what is needed to complete the GMA-mandated updates, staff-recommended updates, and findings from the BAS by the June 30, 2016 deadline.*

Staff will return to LUEC and the full City Council after completion of the Best Available Science (BAS) review to more fully discuss the scope of the update; however, direction from LUEC on the options above can help guide the scoping process, BAS review, and preparing the resources needed to complete the update.