September 16, 2026
Thurston County Planning Commission

CAO Update: Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas Draft Code

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Presentation Outline: FWHCA Draft Code

- Goals and framework
- Overview of changes
- Remaining questions and discussion



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1 Intro

Goals

- Easy to navigate in one place
- Designations tie to publicly accessible data
  - Enable the use of updated data without conflicting with code
- Flexibility without sacrificing protection
- Increased clarity for staff and applicants
- Grounded in positive environmental outcomes

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Major Changes

- Clearly designate all FWHCAs in the chapter
  - Use designation from WDFW for PHS areas
- Adopt WDFW Riparian management zone standards
  - Use site potential tree height
  - Avoid applying lesser standards to non fish-bearing streams
  - Consider channel migration

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Major Changes

- Require subdivision clustering in prairies and elk habitat to encourage preservation and connectivity
- Improve prescriptive standards for prairie areas, including reducing lawn areas and preserving seedbank in historic prairie range
- Develop clearer standards for Oregon White Oak tree protection and designation as priority habitat

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Major Changes

- Ensure use table aligns with designations
- Allow some permeability into RMZs for single-family uses, subject to limits and standards

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5 Changes

Discussion

- Any areas which need additional clarification?
- RMZ framework approach
- Questions

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Topic
Permitting/front counter demonstration
Draft schedule overview and prioritization discussion
Schedule finalization (as needed)
Overview of state guidance and BAS
Geologic Hazard Areas Concepts
No meeting- Power outage
Invite DNR to present new landslide mapping
Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas Concepts
Frequently Flooded Areas Concepts
No Meeting
Geo Hazards code presentation
FFA and CARA code presentation
Wetlands
Wetland and Hydrologic FWHCAs
Dryland Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas
Presentation on SMP and HCP integration

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Schedule

Meeting Date	Topic
6/3/26	Invite DFW to present on FWHCAs
6/17/26	GHA Gap Analysis and Feedback Incorporation
7/1/26	CARA Gap Analysis and Feedback Incorporation
7/15/26	FFA Gap Analysis and Feedback Incorporation
8/5/26	Wetland Gap Analysis and Feedback Incorporation
8/19/26	FWHCA Gap Analysis and Feedback Incorporation
9/2/26	Wetlands Draft Code
9/16/26	Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas Draft Code
10/7/21	Revisit Wetlands and FWHCAs
10/21/26	Permit Processes and General Standards
11/4/26	Revisit Permit Processes and General Standards
11/18/26	Hearing Draft Overview (Open house before PC)
12/2/26	Anticipated Public Hearing
12/16/26	No Meeting Planned
1/6/27	Code Draft Workshop 1
1/20/27	Code Draft Workshop 2
Feb-March 2027	Finalizing and Recommendation

Questions and Comments

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Find future project updates at ThurstonCriticalAreas.org.

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