

## Hickey, Lisa

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**From:** Amber C <amberc.coffman@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 13, 2025 10:42 PM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** Opposed to Critical Areas Regulation (CAR) amendment

Hello,

I am writing to express my concerns for the CAR amendment consideration.

The proposed amendment to the Snohomish County Critical Areas Regulation will cause significant environmental degradation, including reduced water quality, loss of wetland functions, and diminished water storage capacity. There is copious amounts of scientific research that supports the criticality of our wetlands. I've listed just a few at the bottom.

These impacts will ripple through county watersheds and downstream ecosystems like the Sammamish River, Lake Washington, and Puget Sound, exacerbating flood risks and harming aquatic habitats. The degradation of wetlands also poses serious health risks to communities, as wetlands play a critical role in filtering pollutants, maintaining air and water quality, and mitigating climate effects.

Please stop trying to pull the wool over our eyes. This amendment is nothing more than a grab for short-term profits gained from payouts by developers at the cost of long-term ecological sustainability, community health, and the well-being of future generations. While it seeks to address growth capacity, housing affordability, and Urban Growth Area (UGA) constraints, it disregards sustainable alternatives. Strategies such as increasing building heights, promoting Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs), redeveloping underused commercial properties, and utilizing Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) provide pathways to achieve these goals without sacrificing wetlands. These alternatives balance development needs with environmental stewardship, ensuring Snohomish County remains healthy and habitable for generations to come.

Please prioritize the right things. It's our job as residents of these waterways to protect it from corporate greed.

Thank You,  
Amber Coffman

[https://www.spk.usace.army.mil/Portals/12/documents/regulatory/pdf/Wetland\\_Buffers\\_Use\\_and\\_Effectiveness.pdf](https://www.spk.usace.army.mil/Portals/12/documents/regulatory/pdf/Wetland_Buffers_Use_and_Effectiveness.pdf)  
<https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/documents/1306011.pdf>  
<https://www.fs.usda.gov/pnw/sciencef/scifi178.pdf>

## Hickey, Lisa

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**From:** Janelle Eckhardt <janellereckhardt@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 13, 2025 6:23 PM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** Proposed amendments to 24-097

Greetings, As a resident of Snohomish County, I am writing to you today to urge you to reject the proposed amendments to 24-097. Rather, I feel it is in the best interest of our fragile wetland environment to adopt improved buffer provisions. It is vitally important to protect as best we can, our wetlands, streams, and rivers.

Thank you,  
Janelle Eckhardt  
Edmonds, WA

**Hickey, Lisa**

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**From:** Ka <hayrafatah@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 13, 2025 8:26 PM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** January 15th Council Decision Concerns

Dear Snohomish County Councilmembers,

I oppose the proposed amendments to the Critical Areas Regulations that decrease wetland buffer protection and allow some wetlands to be filled. To do so is counter to environmental and human health.

Sincerely,  
Ginger H Gunn, Owner  
4032 224th St SE, #3  
Bothell, WA 98021

**Hickey, Lisa**

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**From:** West Liberty <westliberty1@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 13, 2025 5:31 PM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** Protect snoho county wetlands

As a resident of Snohomish County I oppose the adoption of any amendments to the Critical Area Regulations that decrease buffer protection and allow filling of certain wetlands

-West Liberty

Sent from my iPhone

**Hickey, Lisa**

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**From:** Lianne Lindeke <lilindeke@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 13, 2025 5:55 PM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** No to amendment to Ordinance No. 24-097

Dear Council Member,

I urge you to oppose an amendment to Ordinance No. 24-097, the Critical Areas Regulations Update.

Sponsored by county council members Nate Nehring and Jared Mead, this proposed amendment to the Critical Areas Act would allow developers to replace half of the required buffer with a fence. Fences can be valuable in protecting buffers, but they do not add enough protection to the buffers to justify the buffer reduction.

Please use speak up about this amendment and continue to leverage your position to ensure stronger protections for wetlands and other critical natural environments.

Sincerely,  
Lianne Lindeke  
Edmonds, WA

January 13, 2025 Gayla Shoemake – Voicemail

*(Clerks note: saved at G:ECAF\Council\24-097 2024-2646\Part 3 Council\Public Comment)*

## Hickey, Lisa

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**From:** Shannon Ozog <smozog000@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 13, 2025 8:11 PM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** Public Comment Regarding Wetlands

Snohomish County Council:

Please reject the amendment put forth by Jared Mead and Nate Nehring to reduce the standard buffer widths for our natural waterways and wetlands. Wetland buffers help absorb floodwater runoff, reduce pollution, serve as critical spawning grounds for salmon, moderate water temperatures, and so much more. At a time when our salmon habitat has rapidly diminished, when our whales are starving and carrying dead calves on their backs, when our neighborhoods are experiencing record flooding from storm surge and rising sea levels, this amendment is irresponsible and antithetical to Snohomish County's environmental goals. I am painfully aware of our housing affordability crisis, but more development with little regard to what makes our county such a beautiful place to live is not a sustainable solution. It would be a shame if these houses were to be destroyed by preventable flooding because we filled our wetlands with concrete.

Thank you for your time and consideration,

Shannon Ozog Somes  
Lake Stevens, WA

## Hickey, Lisa

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**From:** Doug Turner <turngrockday@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, January 13, 2025 7:37 PM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** Critical Area Regulations Ordinance

Dear Snohomish County Council,

My name is Doug Turner, and I live at 3201 South Lake Stevens Road, in unincorporated Snohomish County, Lake Stevens Washington 98205. I've lived here for 35 and a half years.

My neighborhood is, and has been for some time zoned R-5. Over the prior three plus decades, every time there is a docket process held, allowing for potential UGA expansions for the cities of Lake Stevens and Snohomish to expand into my surrounding area, our beloved Snohomish County Council wisely says "No." They indicate their desire to maintain this area as a "buffer" between the two cities for as long as possible. I wish to express my sincere gratitude to the council for their thoughtful decisions.

I was dismayed in reading the Everett Herald article on January 11th titled "Critics question habitat ordinance draft." The proposed amendments to the ordinance, seemingly at the last hour, decreasing environmental protections to create flexibility for development is unfathomable.

According to the Herald writer Eliza Aronson, these amendments would modify criteria for reducing buffer widths around critical habitat by as much as 50% without requiring scientific study or creating a mitigation plan to minimize the effects of the changes!

I find this suggestion unbelievable, and a giant step backwards. And for me, begs the question, "Who thinks that this is a good idea?" With the exception of course of council members Jared Mead and Nate Nehring.

To quote Lynwood civil engineer Bill Lider, "This last minute change to allow major revisions in the critical areas ordinance to allow wetlands to be filled and reduction in minimum wetland buffer widths is being ramrodded through, in the dark, and without consideration for public participation." And, "The final ordinance language is being hidden, as is the staff report in an effort to thwart public participation."

In closing, I implore the Snohomish County Council to reject this illegal, outlandish proposal to weaken the Critical Area Regulations ordinance.

Thank you,  
Doug Turner



## Hickey, Lisa

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**From:** Countryman, Ryan  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 15, 2025 8:12 AM  
**To:** Hickey, Lisa  
**Subject:** FW: Ordinance 24-097 Proposed Amendment

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

For the record.

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**From:** Randy Bacon <randobaco@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 10:18 PM  
**To:** Nehring, Nate <nate.nehring@co.snohomish.wa.us>; Dunn, Megan <Megan.Dunn@co.snohomish.wa.us>; Peterson, Strom <Strom.Peterson@co.snohomish.wa.us>; Mead, Jared <Jared.Mead@co.snohomish.wa.us>; Low, Sam <Sam.Low@co.snohomish.wa.us>; Somers, Dave J <Dave.Somers@co.snohomish.wa.us>; Countryman, Ryan <Ryan.Countryman@co.snohomish.wa.us>  
**Subject:** Ordinance 24-097 Proposed Amendment



CAUTION. This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

Dear Councilmembers,

I would like to register my opposition to Amendment 1 to Ordinance 24-097. The proposed critical areas code updates are the result of extensive time and effort by Long Range Planning and other County staff put into researching and interpreting the best available science regarding the protection of our streams, wetlands, and fish and wildlife habitat, as required by the GMA. This update involved months of review and collaboration with multiple agencies, tribes, departments and subject matter experts. Through the entire process there were numerous opportunities for the public and all invested parties to provide comment, engage in conversation, and seek compromises to help shape and inform the code that we will be using for the next several years. This amendment would do away with all of this work based on the preferences of one party with no regard for the work that the dedicated County employees put into this update and the members of the public who support it.

There needs to be productive conversation and compromise on these issues. The people of Snohomish County need places to live. The people of Snohomish County also value the natural environment that makes our region special and provides important functions in our society. Adding a last-minute amendment that strips the ordinance of all input from one group in deference to another with no collaboration or coordination is not the way to foster such relationships. The amendment offers no research or arguments to suggest that the best available science provided in the update proposal was erroneous or inapplicable, it simply asserts that it should not be incorporated. County staff provided months of work based on dozens of cited papers, resources, and studies to demonstrate how the proposed measures protect our natural resources and prevent their degradation. The proponents of this amendment have, to my knowledge, provided no evidence to

support their claim that the proposed critical areas protections will significantly impact the housing market. This does not appear to me to be a fair, balanced, or reasoned approach to establishing code that all residents are expected to follow. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Randy Bacon  
Senior Environmental Planner  
Snohomish County

## Hickey, Lisa

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**From:** Katy Bigelow <arboristkaty@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 6:15 AM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** Proposed Critical Area amendments

Hello, as an arborist working in the local area I see a lot of changes to our neighborhoods when people subdivide or build larger home projects. Often these projects cut down large swaths of trees and \*sometimes\* some trees and landscaping are replaced. Mostly these replacements do not and will not capture or provide the same benefits as those that are lost.

While we are in a critical housing shortage, building into Critical Areas is NOT a solution. Shrinking areas that are currently considered "CRITICAL" is not an environmentally smart move for our future will only benefit those who would be allowed to build into those areas. The proposed amendment allowing developers to fill Category IV and Category IV wetlands will result in degraded water quality and reduced water storage in all Snohomish County watersheds.

Furthmore, this action will have negative impacts in all county stream/river systems ending up in Puget Sound - which is your home too.

Please consider keeping the current verbiage in place!! This is your opportunity to significantly impact our environmental future!

Thank you for thinking of our future - Katy Bigelow

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Katy Bigelow  
206.351.1375  
[www.katybigelow.com](http://www.katybigelow.com)

- ISA Board Certified Master Arborist®

International Society of Arboriculture Certified Arborist PN-6039B  
PNW ISA Tree Risk Assessment Qualified  
Registered Consulting Arborist® #490  
Member - American Society of Consulting Arborists

Find me on [Facebook!](#)

**Hickey, Lisa**

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**From:** mclatterbaugh2010@gmail.com  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 10:34 PM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** FW: ALERT: Snohomish County Council Amendment on Critical Areas Regulation

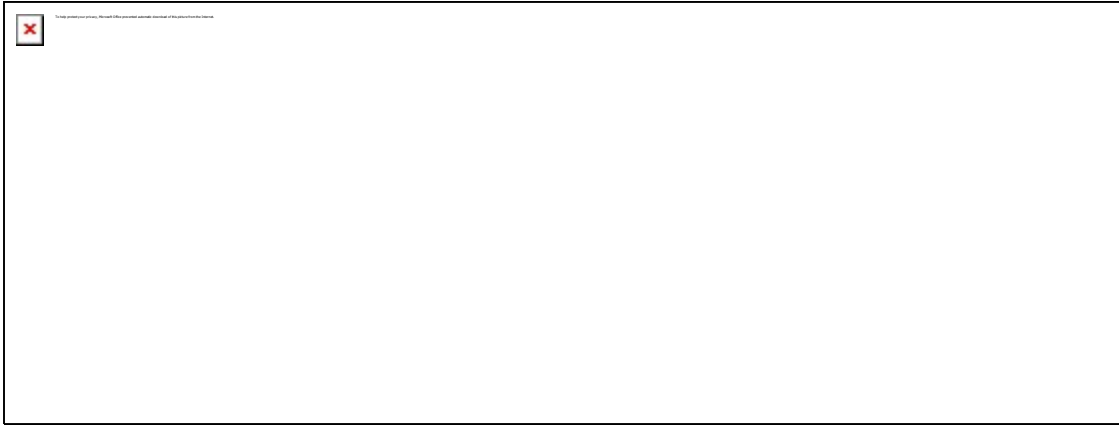
Dear County Council members,

I am concerned that you are considering reducing protections for wetlands and salmon habitat. I urge you to read the information below from environmental experts and vote no on any amendments to the Critical Areas Regulations that reduce stream buffers or otherwise adversely affect wetlands in our county

Sincerely  
Martha Clatterbaugh

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**From:** Adopt A Stream Foundation  
**Sent:** Saturday, January 11, 2025 2:20 PM  
**To:** mclatterbaugh2010@gmail.com  
**Subject:** ALERT: Snohomish County Council Amendment on Critical Areas Regulation



**ALERT:**

**Snohomish County**

**Critical Areas Regulation (CAR)**

**amendment will result in negative impacts on wetlands**

*Streams are often viewed as the veins that flow to rivers that evolve into the arteries of our ecosystems. Wetlands are commonly referred to as the kidneys of streams and rivers. These fragile natural features filter pollutants. Wetlands store water. They provide essential wildlife habitat...from a biomass perspective, wetlands are the most productive places on the planet. Wetlands are also points of entry for surface waters to seep into the ground water systems enabling streams and rivers to flow during dry periods.*

*When wetlands are degraded or filled, water quality in streams and rivers is degraded as is the water quality where streams and rivers flow. When wetlands in watersheds surrounding streams and rivers are degraded, the water quality of Puget Sound is degraded as well. Habitat required for salmon shrinks as do the numbers of salmon. When we lose our wetlands, we lose our salmon.*

*Ecologically, we have been seeing in the news a resident Killer Whale mother carrying her dead baby in Puget Sound. The loss of her baby and other resident Killer Whales is attributed to the loss of Chinook salmon. There is a direct connection to the loss of Chinook salmon and the degradation and losses of our wetlands...something that people can easily prevent.”*

Tom Murdoch, Adopt A Stream Foundation Director

January 15 at 10:30 am, the Snohomish County Council is holding a public hearing to determine whether or not to amend the Snohomish County *Critical Areas Regulation (CAR)*.

[VIEW THE AMENDMENT HERE!](#)

As you can see by reviewing that amendment, Council members Mead and Nehring are proposing to (a) reduce “buffers” between new development and wetlands, and to (b) allow small wetlands to be filled. (c) Their rationale is “that maintaining flexibility for designing new development (1) maintains capacity for growth inside Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) (2) helps address housing affordability challenges and (3) reduces pressure to expand UGAs in the future.”

**However, the rationale presented does not consider negative environmental impact that will result if this amendment is approved!**

The following response to the amendment outlines potential negative impacts and alternative actions that should be considered.

### **Wetland Buffer Reduction**

The science is clear about the negative effects that undersized vegetated buffers between new development and wetlands have on adjacent wetlands. Most significantly, water pollution filtration functions are significantly degraded.

Specifically, wetland buffers protect the water quality of wetlands through four basic mechanisms:

They remove sediment (and attached pollutants) from surface water flowing across the buffer.

They biologically treat surface and shallow groundwater through plant uptake or by biological conversion of nutrients and bacteria into less harmful forms.

They bind dissolved pollutants by adsorption onto clay and humus particles in the soil.

They help maintain the water temperatures in the wetland through shading and blocking wind.

Recent research indicates that buffers protect water quality through several additional mechanisms:

They remove pollutants from groundwater flows through interaction of the soils and deep-rooted plants.

They infiltrate polluted surface waters and slow the flow so pollutants can be removed more effectively.

## Update on Wetland Buffers Final Report October 2013

<https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/documents/1306011.pdf>

Wetland Scientist Sarah Cooke studied 21 wetlands in King and Snohomish counties in a post-project evaluation to assess the effectiveness of buffers in protecting wetlands from human disturbances. Efficiency was measured qualitatively, using observations of human caused disturbance to the wetland and buffer to indicate loss of buffer effectiveness.

Cooke found that the effectiveness of a buffer in protecting adjacent wetlands was dependent on:

- Intensity of adjacent land use;
- Buffer width;
- Buffer vegetative cover type; and
- Buffer area ownership.

According to Cooke, “Nearly all of the buffers that were less than 50-feet-wide at the time they were established demonstrated a significant decrease in effective size within a few years; in some instances, degradation was so great that buffers were effectively eliminated.”

According to Washington Department of Ecology analysis in their publication *Wetland Buffers: Use and Effectiveness*, “Buffer widths effective in preventing significant water quality impacts to wetlands are generally 100 feet or greater. Sensitive wetland systems will require greater distances and degraded systems with low habitat value will require less.”

### Wetland Buffers: Use and Effectiveness

[https://www.spk.usace.army.mil/Portals/12/documents/regulatory/pdf/Wetland\\_Buffers\\_Use\\_and\\_Effectiveness.pdf](https://www.spk.usace.army.mil/Portals/12/documents/regulatory/pdf/Wetland_Buffers_Use_and_Effectiveness.pdf)

### Wetland Filling

Under the proposed amendment, Category IV wetland 4000 square feet or smaller and Category IV wetlands 1000 square feet or smaller can be filled, provided there is mitigation per [SCC 30.62A.340](#) primarily by wetland creation or enhancement.

**However, mitigating for wetland destruction is often ineffective and will not adequately replace the functions of wetland habitats being destroyed.** The Washington Department of Ecology has conducted follow-up studies of wetland

igation and determined that 50% failed in one or more respects (*Wetland Mitigation Replacement Ratios: Defining Equivalency*).

### **Wetland Mitigation Replacement Ratios: Defining Equivalency**

<https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/documents/92008.pdf>

According to the National Association of Wetland Managers “created wetlands are often more unstable in the landscape than natural wetlands and often quickly fill with sediment. Attempts to create wetlands also quite often fail because it is difficult to ‘get the hydrology’ right.” See Common Questions: *Wetland Restoration, Creation and Enhancement*.

### **Wetland Restoration, Creation and Enhancement**

[https://www.nawm.org/pdf\\_lib/20\\_restoration\\_6\\_26\\_06.pdf](https://www.nawm.org/pdf_lib/20_restoration_6_26_06.pdf)

In Washington state, a Class IV wetland is a wetland that is small, isolated, and has the least diverse vegetation. These wetlands are often heavily disturbed and have the lowest levels of functions. However, all store water periodically during the year. How much do they store? The answer to that question is found in the *Question & Answers* section below.

**Rational for wetland buffer reduction and filling of Class IV wetlands per the proposed amendment does not consider alternatives that will not degrade wetlands.**

As noted in the [proposed amendment](#), the rational for the amendment is: “(1) maintains capacity for growth inside Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) (2) helps address housing affordability challenges and (3) reduces pressure to expand UGAs in the future.”

**There are a number of alternatives to degrading wetlands that can meet the objectives presented above.**

Some of those alternative include:

“Building up instead of out” (increasing height restrictions in residential and commercial zones).

Encouraging development of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) by reducing associated permit fees and other means.

Increasing height limits on Urban Villages now limited to 40-feet to 65-feet+ provide density bonuses for including more affordable housing at those locations.



redeveloping commercial properties such as old shopping centers on transit lines into new Urban Villages with business and shopping space on the ground floor above underground parking.

Using the *Transfer of Development Rights* option to create partnerships between individuals with undeveloped property and commercial builders enabling commercial builders to get affordable housing “density bonuses” and provide a percent of profits to the partners with undeveloped land in exchange for keeping that undeveloped land undeveloped.

**Conclusion: The proposed Critical Areas Regulation (CAR) amendment will result in degraded water quality and reduced water storage in all Snohomish County watersheds.**

In addition, this action will have negative impacts in all county stream/river systems and down stream where County streams flow including the Sammamish River, Lake Washington, Lake Union in King County, the Sammamish River and Lake Washington, Skagit County, and Puget Sound.

Furthermore, there are alternatives to degrading wetlands that (1) maintains capacity for growth inside Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) (2) helps address housing affordability challenges and (3) reduces pressure to expand UGAs in the future.

**If you have concerns about the proposed CAR amendment, [share those concerns with the Snohomish County Council](#) and consider sharing your concerns at their January 15, 10:30am public hearing.**

Please feel free to pull language and references from this email to use in your email to the Snohomish County Council. If you would like further support please reach out to [aasf@streamkeeper.org](mailto:aasf@streamkeeper.org) for more resources.

**Email Snohomish County Council Now!**

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### ***Questions & Answers***

***How do I contact the Snohomish County Council?***

their contact information is on the Snohomish County Council website <https://snohomishcountywa.gov/172/County-Council>.

***How can I find out the locations of each Snohomish County Council District?***

Those maps can be viewed from this link <https://www.snohomishcountywa.gov/906/District-Maps>.

***How do I attend a Snohomish County Council Meeting?***

You can attend in person by going to the Jackson Board Room on the 8th floor of the Robert J. Drewel Bldg. at 3000 Rockefeller Avenue in Everett WA.

You can also attend by zoom or telephone, details can be found on this link:

<https://snohomishcountywa.gov/2288/Archived-Meetings>.

***How can I calculate how much water a wetland holds?***

The formula that is used is **Length X Width X Depth = Cubic Feet**. Then, multiply the number of cubic feet by a cubic feet to gallons factor of 7.49.

Using this formula with the assumption that a wetland is approximately 20-feet long and 50-feet wide you will learn that it holds 1000 cubic feet of water that equates to 7,490 gallons. If the wetland is 50'-long and 80'-wide with one foot of water, that 4000 square foot wetland will hold 29,960 gallons of water.

***How much water is in a Class IV wetland 1000 square feet in size or 4000 square feet in size that gets inundated with rainfall 12 times a year and resulting in an average depth of 12 inches during those "atmospheric event" periods?***

The 1000-square foot wetland will hold 89,980 gallons of water.

The 4000 square foot wetland will hold 359,520 gallons.

***How many Class IV wetlands that are 1000-square feet and 4000 square feet in size are there in Snohomish County?***

That is unknown. However, since these wetlands are relatively small it is safe to assume that there are up to twenty 1000-square foot wetlands per square-mile. It is also safe to assume that there are up to ten 4000-square foot wetlands per square-mile.

***How many acres in a square mile?***

0 acres.

***How many square miles are there in each watershed?***

That number varies widely, however the Quilceda Creek watershed in Council member Nehring's district is approximately 30 square miles in size as is the North Creek watershed in Council member Mead's district.

***How much water would be displaced if all of the Class IV wetlands were filled in the Quilceda Creek or North Creek watersheds?***

Assuming each is 30-square miles and there are 20 Class IV wetlands that are 1000-square feet in size per square mile, and there are 2000 wetlands that are 4000 square feet in size, and each holds an average of one-foot in depth, there will be 4,494,000 gallons stored in the 1000-square foot wetlands and 8,970,000 gallons in the 4000 square foot wetlands. Together, that amounts to 13,464,000 gallons during one "atmospheric river" event.

Assume that there are 12 large rainfall events then that number increases to 161,568,000 gallons of water.

***What happens if that water noted above in the Class IV wetlands in Quilceda and North Creek watersheds are not drained?***

That water will slowly seep into the groundwater system and provide a source of water for stream flows during dry periods.

***What happens if all of those wetland get filled and mitigation efforts do not work?***

The worst-case scenario is that that water will become surface water and drain rapidly in to streams via storm drain system resulting in increased peak and volume flows, stream bank erosion, over-bank flooding, scouring of gravel in stream destroying habitat that salmon need for reproduction.

During dry periods, since the ground water system has not been recharged with 161,568,000 gallons of rainfall, stream flow will be very low and water temperatures in streams will be abnormally high depleting oxygen that salmon need to survive in freshwater. Furthermore, there will be a higher concentration of water pollution in the stream systems.

***All the feared environmental degradation happen all at once?***

. It will be very incremental over time. As time passes, and the impacts increase, then there will be questions/ comment  
e:

“What happened to my stream? It used to flow all year round.”

“The County better spend some money to build controls on all this stormwater.”

“Is it safe to let my kids play in my local stream.”

“When I bought my place next to the creek, I never got flooded.”

“What the heck happened to the salmon run?”

“Boy, this creek has become as real mess.”

“Maybe we should just put it in a pipe.”

***Here a local example of what has happened over time?***

s. In 1978, salmon were observed (by Tom Murdoch) spawning just downstream from what is now Everett Mall Way in the  
in stem of North Creek. Water flowed all year round from there downstream from South Everett, through Snohomish  
County’s McCollum Park, past what is now the City of Mill Creek, under I-405 into what was the Truly Farms (now Bothell  
Business Park), past what is now the University of Washington Bothell Campus, under the Burke Gilman Trail into the  
Sammamish River. The Sammamish flows into Lake Washington, Lake Union, the Ship Canal, and into Puget Sound through  
the Ballard Locks.

uring 1978, Murdoch observed salmon “so thick that you could walk across their backs” in Snohomish County’s McCollu  
rk. Since then, over 60% of the upper two miles of this 30square mile watershed has been covered with hard surfaces su  
roads, housing developments, shopping centers, rooftops, and parking lots.

e headwater of NorthCreek is now a pond on a Fred Meyer parking lot north of what is now Evergreen way. The majority o  
tlands in the upper part of the watershed have been filled and the riparian zone next to North Creek has virtually  
appeared upstream from McCollum Park at 128th Street SE.

upstream McCollum Park, there is a golf driving range on the east side of the creek and an athletic club on the west. The respective parking lots are within 25-feet of the top of North Creek's stream banks. Now, there is no stream flow from the headwaters to the McCollum Park during the summer months. Salmon no longer spawn in the park.

Between 1978 and now is a long time in human terms, but that is a mere millisecond in geologic time.

***How can I find out what salmon are found in near me?***

A great resource for locations of salmon streams is found in the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife interactive map system called SalmonScape <https://apps.wdfw.wa.gov/salmonscape/map.html>

***What are the basics of the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA)?***

You can find the answer to that question here: <https://mrsc.org/explore-topics/planning/gma/growth-management-act/basics>.

***Does the GMA require growth to concentrate in Urban Growth Areas?***

S.

***Does the GMA require local government to create regulations to protect "critical areas" in Urban Growth Area?***

S.

Under the GMA, all cities and counties - even if they are not subject to comprehensive planning - are directed to designate natural resource lands (including those related to forestry, agriculture, fisheries, and mining) and identify steps to preserve them. For more information, see the Department of Commerce's [Natural Resource Lands](#) page.

In addition, all cities and counties in Washington are also required to adopt critical areas regulations. As defined in [RCW 70A.030](#)(6):

"critical areas" include the following areas and ecosystems: (a) Wetlands; (b) areas with a critical recharging effect on aquifers used for potable water; (c) fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas; (d) frequently flooded areas; and (e) geologically hazardous areas. "Fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas" does not include such artificial features or structures as irrigation delivery systems, irrigation infrastructure, irrigation canals, or drainage ditches that lie within the boundaries of and are maintained by a port district or an irrigation district or company.

In 2023, [SB 5374](#) amended [RCW 36.70A.060](#) allowing a city of fewer than 25,000 people to adopt their county's GMA critical areas regulations by reference. Counties and cities are required to include the best available science in developing policies and development regulations to protect the functions and values of critical areas [RCW 36.70A.172](#).

For more information, see our page on [Critical Areas](#) and the Department of Commerce's page on [Critical Areas Protection](#), including their useful [Critical Areas Handbook](#) (2023).

[Protect our Wetlands! Email Snohomish County Council!](#)

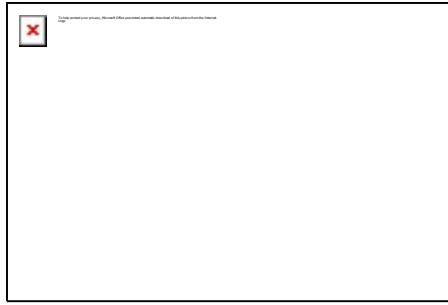
[Salmonscape - Where will the salmon go next?](#)

[Streamkeeper.org](#)

**The Adopt A Stream Foundation mission:**

**“TO TEACH PEOPLE HOW TO BECOME STEWARDS OF THEIR WATERSHEDS”**

**That mission is carried out by producing environmental education materials, conducting Streamkeeper Academy events for all ages, and providing local communities with stream and wetland restoration technical assistance.**



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\*Alert: Snohomish County Critical Areas Regulation (CAR) Amendment\*

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The Adopt A Stream Foundation  
600 128th St SE  
Everett, WA 98208-6353

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You can [update your preferences](#) or [unsubscribe from this list](#).

## Hickey, Lisa

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**From:** The Clearwater School <TCS@clearwaterschool.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 10:27 PM  
**To:** Contact Council; county.executive@co.snoh; County Executive  
**Subject:** The Clearwater School Opposes Critical Areas Regulation (CAR) Amendment

Dear Snohomish County Council Members,

The Clearwater School, an independent democratic school located in an unincorporated Snohomish County in Bothell, **strongly opposes the proposed amendment to the Snohomish County Critical Areas Regulation (CAR)**. We believe this amendment will have significant adverse environmental impacts and would like to ask you to reconsider. As a democratic school, our students and staff alike voted today to oppose this amendment, which will have long-lasting impacts on our riparian restoration site and the continued resilience and sustainability of the larger watershed.

The Clearwater School is deeply committed to the continued health of The Clearwater Reach, which lies along 4 acres of North Creek. We have undertaken several major restoration projects on our campus, funded in part by Snohomish County, The Salmon Recovery Funding Board, and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. With our watershed partners, we continue to steward our beautiful site through biocultural projects, plantings, and daily stewardship through the labor of our students, who remove invasives, spread mulch, plant vegetation, and remove garbage from the waterway. In collective stewardship, we work with our watershed partners, Sound Salmon Solutions, Adopt-A-Stream, The Clearwater Commons, the University of Washington Bothell, Cascadia College, and many others. We are also working with The Wellbeing Center to develop a place-based environmental education curriculum that will provide the larger community with access to this site through after-school and break camps.

Since moving to this site in 2006, we have observed a decline in the salmon population, along with an increase in garbage and invasive species. The landscape has degraded, leading to reduced wetland buffers that negatively impact water quality, increase pollutants, and allow more sediment to enter North Creek. Furthermore, we have noticed an increase in flooding events, which poses a threat to our banks. The increase in development will only increase and intensify these events, displacing critical wetlands buffers that slow down, store, and filter the water before it hits the creek. The CAR amendment weakens our wetland protections, and we are very concerned that this will severely harm North Creek, a waterway already under severe health risk.

**The Clearwater School stands ready to discuss these concerns further. We encourage you to visit our website to learn more about our efforts to support larger watershed conservation networks, and urge you to consider alternative solutions that achieve growth goals while protecting our critical wetlands. Please consider coming to our campus to visit our site and discuss ways we can develop housing in an environmentally just way.**

**In Solidarity,**

**The Clearwater School**

The Clearwater School Staff + Students:  
Bryer Newlin (they/them)  
Evan Spong (he/him)



Gabriel Klein (he/him)  
Kendra Petersen, Admin (she/her)  
Stephanie Sarantos RN, PhD (she/they)  
Tamara Wood, Groundskeeper (she/her)  
[www.clearwaterschool.com](http://www.clearwaterschool.com)  
425.489.2050



## Hickey, Lisa

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**From:** ken crossman <ken\_crossman@msn.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 10:24 AM  
**To:** Contact Council; Mead, Jared; Nehring, Nate; Dunn, Megan; Peterson, Strom; Low, Sam  
**Subject:** Ordinance 24-097 (Proposed amendment 1)

Dear Council Members,

It is concerning you would even consider this amendment without thinking about the environmental consequences of this action. Wetland buffers effectively mitigate upstream runoff by absorbing excess hydrology by acting like a sponge to help regulate the rate and volume of downstream discharge into the wetland. New development activity creates impervious surfaces that generate increased volume of storm water runoff that if not fully infiltrated may result in downstream impacts to streams and wetlands as a result of the increase in volume. Snohomish County soils have approximately sixty percent of the county classified as a soil with glacial till at 20 to 40 inches with the mean being approximately 30 inches. This does not allow for full infiltration under current drainage regulations which results in an increase in post development storm water discharge volume guaranteed. The current drainage code regulates discharge of post development volume increase under Minimum Requirement 8 for direct discharge of runoff to a wetland. Discharge of runoff out of a level spreader at the edge of the wetland buffer would not qualify as a direct discharge as the runoff would effectively spread out thru the buffer and result in subsurface delayed discharge to the wetland in most cases. This would not be subject to the more restrictive Minimum Requirement 8. Reducing the wetland buffer may result in direct concentrated flows to the wetland, which is concerning. In some cases, this could result in development not being able to meet the current drainage regulations and therefore reducing the number of developable lots on a parcel. Also, there may be unavoidable impacts to streams due to the current duration standards do not address all storm events. Currently there is no link between buffer reduction and Ecology's 2021 Interagency Wetland Mitigation Guidance recommendations to agencies for discharge of stormwater to a level spreader at the edge of the buffer after detention and water quality treatment. To summarize, reduction in wetland buffers may have serious environmental impacts which I do not believe have been considered in this proposal.

The direct impact of passing this amendment will only result in developers gaining extra lots which has always been the game. Since the great recession caused a reduction in small local developers, large out of state publicly traded companies have dominated the industry. They operate based on profit and units per quarter. Getting an extra lot or two has always been the game. You are listening to the wrong people about affordable housing.

Sincerely  
Ken W. Crossman P.E.

## Hickey, Lisa

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**From:** Bob Danson <bobd@ovwater.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 9:07 AM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Cc:** Kelly Boswell; Billy Ward  
**Subject:** Comments on Ordinance 24-097 – Critical Areas Regulations (CAR) Update

Dear Snohomish County Council Members,

My name is **Bob Danson**, and I serve as the General Manager of the **Olympic View Water & Sewer District**. Thank you for the opportunity to provide further comments on **Ordinance 24-097** regarding the proposed updates to the Critical Areas Regulations (CAR), specifically those involving Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas (CARAs) and potential infiltration through Underground Injection Control (UIC) wells.

To provide context for our comments, Olympic View’s 228th Street SW Wellfield, located in the southwest corner of Snohomish County, draws from a shallow aquifer that is highly susceptible to contamination. Shallow groundwater aquifers allow pollutants—such as PFAS, which are persistent in the environment—to travel rapidly to the source water aquifer, increasing the risk of polluting the aquifer and making it no longer feasible as a drinking water source. As a result, it is crucial that any proposed stormwater infiltration practices are opposed to prevent contamination. A large portion of our wellfield’s capture zone is in unincorporated Snohomish County, including the Esperance area and other nearby communities. This underscores the urgent need for enhanced protections to ensure the safety of public drinking water for the community we serve.

I want to acknowledge and thank the County for its recent progress on this draft, such as requiring notice to Group A water providers and clarifying that “avoidance of impacts is the standard within Group A wellhead protection areas.” These additions represent positive steps toward ensuring the safety of our drinking water sources.

However, we still have the following concerns:

**1. Automatic Non-Endangerment & WAC 173-218-100**

- The draft does not guarantee notification of Group A water providers about projects that claim “automatic” non-endangerment under **WAC 173-218-100(1)**.
- **Federal law (Title 40 CFR 144)** requires case-by-case endangerment assessments. UIC wells permitted under WAC 173-218-100 can carry contaminants—particularly **PFAS**—that pose a direct threat to groundwater. The proposed CAR update does not provide for the required case-by-case endangerment assessments for projects claiming automatic non-endangerment, as mandated by federal law.
- Exclusions in **WAC 173-218-050, -040, and -100**, as well as the absence of clear language in **section .340**, limit the scope of review. **Section .345**, while allowing Group A water providers to impose conditions, is hindered if notification is incomplete or delayed.

**2. Shallow Aquifer Vulnerability**

- The **228th Street SW Wellhead** is especially susceptible due to its shallow aquifer. Contaminants can travel quickly through shallow groundwater, making early notification and rigorous review of all UIC proposals critical.

### 3. Protecting the Esperance Neighborhood

- A substantial portion of our 228th Street SW Wellfield capture zone lies within the unincorporated Esperance area. Given the persistence and mobility of chemicals like PFAS, introducing UIC wells here—or in any CARA—creates a serious threat to public health and drinking water quality.

### 4. Action Requests

- **Prohibit UIC Wells in CARAs:** The ideal approach is to prohibit UIC wells in CARAs, as this is the most reliable method to protect vulnerable aquifers from contamination. However, short of this, we request the following additional provisions to safeguard public drinking water.
- **Prohibit UIC Wells in the 228<sup>th</sup> St Wellhead Protection Area: This option will protect this vulnerable shallow drinking water aquifer identified by Best Available Science in Olympic View’s Watershed Protection Plan.**
- **Notification:** Require Group A water providers to be notified of **all** proposed UIC activities in CARAs—no exceptions.”
- **Authority:** Give Group A water providers clear authority to **restrict or prohibit infiltration** where contamination risks exist.

## References & Direct Links

Multiple sources underline the risks of PFAS and other emerging contaminants in runoff and building materials. The following direct URLs will help you access these documents quickly:

### 1. Washington State Department of Ecology

*Quality Assurance Project Plan: Survey of PFAS in the Greater Lake Washington Watershed*  
<https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/documents/2003112.pdf>

### 2. 2021 Green Science Policy Institute Document – PFAS in Building Materials

*Building a Better World: Eliminating Unnecessary PFAS in Building Materials*  
<https://greensciencepolicy.org/docs/pfas-building-materials-2021.pdf>

### 3. Aeterra Article

*PFAS in Stormwater & Building Materials: Understanding the Pathways and Risks*  
<https://www.aeterra.com/news/pfas-in-stormwater-building-materials-understanding-the-pathways-and-risks>

These documents confirm that even seemingly benign runoff can contain PFAS and other pollutants, making a precautionary approach essential. Ensuring thorough review—rather than relying on “automatic” exemptions—will help Snohomish County uphold both state and federal regulations and guidelines while protecting public health.

Thank you for considering these concerns as you deliberate on **Ordinance 24-097**. We appreciate your continued efforts and look forward to working together to ensure the final regulations protect our critical drinking water resources.

**Sincerely,**

**Bob Danson**, General Manager  
Olympic View Water and Sewer District  
8128 228th Street SW

Edmonds, WA 98026-8449

[bobd@owwater.com](mailto:bobd@owwater.com)

p: (425) 774-7769



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Email from this address is subject to public disclosure pursuant to RCW 42.56.

**Hickey, Lisa**

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**From:** Hans Dunshee <hansdunshee@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 9:07 PM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** buffer reduction

Hello Council members.

Please oppose the 50% reduction in buffer widths for wetlands. The fence proposal is meaningless. The purpose of the buffer width is to protect the water system from pollutants and high water flows which cause flooding down stream. A fence does nothing about pollutants or flow speeds.

The cumulative effects of the proposed reduction, since it will become the default setback for all development in the county, is increased pollution in our waterways and increase runoff speeds.

This will add to problems you have to deal with in your duties, salmon recovery, water quality, and stormwater runoff.

Please vote no on the proposed amendment.

Thank you for your time reading this and your service.

Hans Dunshee

## Hickey, Lisa

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**From:** Lauralyn Feetham <laurie.feetham@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 5:48 PM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** Ordinance#24-097

I live in Mountlake Terrace, Snohomish County. I am writing in regard to Ordinance #24-097, relating to the Critical Areas Update pursuant to the Growth Management Act, amending Snohomish County Code Chapters 30.62A Wetlands and Fish and Wildlife Habitat, 30.62B Geologically Hazard Area, 30.62C Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas, 30.43C Flood Hazard Permits, 30.86 Fees.

I would prefer to write to each of you, and in more detail, before the Hearing January 15th, but time does not permit. I cannot attend the Hearing for scheduling reasons.

My request is that a decision about whether or not to adopt the amendments be postponed to a later date. Current environmental events make it clear this is not a time to rush such momentous decisions as these.

I'm confident more articulate and more credentialed people than me are providing you with detailed specifics about the negative environmental impacts of weakening the Critical Areas Regulations..  
Reducing water storage and risking more degradation of water quality come to my mind right away. And I have a real problem with small wetlands being considered "insignificant" and thus okay to be filled in for development. It's all connected, folks. I won't even start on fish and wildlife and quality of human life. Or heat studies. Or wildfires.

What happens upstream in Snohomish County affects what happens downstream....Swamp Creek into the Sammamish River into Lake Washington ( hello Kenmore and Lake Forest Park!) and on into Lake Union and into the Sound...I'm sure you all get it.

My experience with Snohomish County Critical Areas includes living on acreage on Swamp Creek, which included a view of what I believe is now being called Eastglen wetlands. My college coursework included habitat restoration field work on Kuhlman Creek near the Centennial Trail, and a rain garden installation at Snoqualmie Ice Cream company in Maltby.

I've been a volunteer Salmon Watcher, counting fish in North Creek. I also counted fish in Lyon Creek, which originates in Snohomish County.

I lived adjacent to the mouth of Tributary 0056, which has some of its origins Snohomish County, for almost 20 years, including during the flood event which ultimately resulted in a homeowner bringing in heavy equipment to relocate the mouth of the creek to its present location in Log Boom Park.

And I'm no stranger to housing insecurity, so I am not without insight about the affordable housing aspects of all this.

Thank you each of you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Lauralyn Feetham

## Hickey, Lisa

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**From:** Cathy Ferbrache <cathyferb@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 8:29 AM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** Protect Our Wetlands and Waterways

Dear Snohomish County Council Members,

I urge the Council to reject the amendments to Ordinance No. 24-097. To reduce buffers and fill wetlands is not consistent with our best available science, with the GMA, nor follows the advice of some on the County's Planning Commission. A majority of voters in Washington voted to reject I-2117 and retain the efforts made to improve water quality in inland waters, streams and wetlands. The amendments to Ordinance No. 24-097 disrespects these constituents.

The sight of Tahlequah carrying another dead calf for a second week is fresh in everyone's memory. A raw reminder that fellow creatures are paying the price for prioritizing profits over the planet. Many want policies that improve inland waterways to make them healthy habitats for our native fish to spawn and mature before going out to sea and become food for Southern Resident Orcas. Right now, they are starving. I am a constituent in District 4 and support management of land as a finite resource not as a commodity, since land ownership, whether public or private, carries responsibility for stewardship. These proposed amendments to Ordinance No. 24-097 will damage the functions of critical areas, streams, and lakes in Snohomish County. The waters that flow in Snohomish County also flow into King County impacting North Creek, Swamp Creek and Little Bear Creek to name a few. Reducing buffers and allowing wetlands to be filled in is not about providing affordable housing, it's bowing to the will of the developers.

Please reject these amendments to Ordinance No. 24-097 and prove me wrong.

Sincerely,  
Cathy Ferbrache



## Hickey, Lisa

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**From:** Todd Gray <toddgray@tulaliptribes-nsn.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 7:57 AM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** Testimony re: Ordinance 24-097, January 15, 2024 Council Hearing

Good morning,

The Tulalip Tribes would like to provide oral testimony on Ordinance 24-097 at tomorrow's council hearing, if possible. Please let me know what the procedure is for doing so.

Additionally, we would like to request a continuance, so we may have more opportunity for consultation on critical areas code amendments after the hearing.

Thank you,

**Todd Gray**  
Environmental Protection Ecologist  
The Tulalip Tribes | Natural Resources Dept.  
360-716-4620 | [toddgray@tulaliptribes-nsn.gov](mailto:toddgray@tulaliptribes-nsn.gov)

January 14, 2025 Chris Hoover – Voicemail

*(Clerks note: saved at G:ECAF\Council\24-097 2024-2646\Part 3 Council\Public Comment)*

**Hickey, Lisa**

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**From:** Hillary Johnson <hillaryjohnson@outlook.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 5:28 PM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** The proposed Critical Areas Regulation (CAR) amendment will harm our wetlands & watersheds!

As a Snohomish County resident and voter, I oppose this amendment. Please see the following information and contact [aasf@streamkeeper.org](mailto:aasf@streamkeeper.org) for further assistance in making good decisions for our wetlands and communities.

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Snohomish County Critical Areas Regulation amendment will result in negative impacts on wetlands.

**On January 15 at 10:30 am, the Snohomish County Council is holding a public hearing to determine whether or not to amend the Snohomish County *Critical Areas Regulation (CAR)*.**

[VIEW THE AMENDMENT HERE!](#)

As you can see by reviewing that amendment, Council members Mead and Nehring are proposing to (a) reduce “buffers” between new development and wetlands, and to (b) allow small wetlands to be filled. (c) Their rationale is “that maintaining flexibility for designing new development (1) maintains capacity for growth inside Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) (2) helps address housing affordability challenges and (3) reduces pressure to expand UGAs in the future.”

**However, the rationale presented does not consider negative environmental impact that will result if this amendment is approved!**

The following response to the amendment outlines potential negative impacts and alternative actions that should be considered.

**(a) Wetland Buffer Reduction**

The science is clear about the negative effects that undersized vegetated buffers between new development and wetlands have on adjacent wetlands. Most significantly, water pollution filtration functions are significantly degraded.

Specifically, wetland buffers protect the water quality of wetlands through four basic mechanisms:

- They remove sediment (and attached pollutants) from surface water flowing across the buffer.
- They biologically treat surface and shallow groundwater through plant uptake or by biological conversion of nutrients and bacteria into less harmful forms.
- They bind dissolved pollutants by adsorption onto clay and humus particles in the soil.
- They help maintain the water temperatures in the wetland through shading and blocking wind.

Recent research indicates that buffers protect water quality through several additional mechanisms:

- They remove pollutants from groundwater flows through interaction of the soils and deep-rooted plants.
- They infiltrate polluted surface waters and slow the flow so pollutants can be removed more effectively.

**Update on Wetland Buffers Final Report October 2013**

<https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/documents/1306011.pdf>

Wetland Scientist Sarah Cooke studied 21 wetlands in King and Snohomish counties in a post-project evaluation to assess the effectiveness of buffers in protecting wetlands from human disturbances. Efficiency was measured qualitatively, using observations of human caused disturbance to the wetland and buffer to indicate loss of buffer effectiveness.

Cooke found that the effectiveness of a buffer in protecting adjacent wetlands was dependent on:

- intensity of adjacent land use;
- buffer width;
- buffer vegetative cover type; and
- buffer area ownership.

According to Cooke, “Nearly all of the buffers that were less than 50-feet-wide at the time they were established demonstrated a significant decrease in effective size within a few years; in some instances, degradation was so great that the buffers were effectively eliminated.”

According to Washington Department of Ecology analysis in their publication *Wetland Buffers: Use and Effectiveness*, “Buffer widths effective in preventing significant water quality impacts to wetlands are generally 100 feet or greater. Sensitive wetland systems will require greater distances and degraded systems with low habitat value will require less.”

#### **Wetland Buffers: Use and Effectiveness**

[https://www.spk.usace.army.mil/Portals/12/documents/regulatory/pdf/Wetland\\_Buffers\\_Use\\_and\\_Effectiveness.pdf](https://www.spk.usace.army.mil/Portals/12/documents/regulatory/pdf/Wetland_Buffers_Use_and_Effectiveness.pdf)

#### **(b) Wetland Filling**

Per the proposed amendment, Category IV wetland 4000 square feet or smaller and Category IV wetlands 1000 square feet or smaller can be filled, provided there is mitigation per [SCC 30.62A.340](#) primarily by wetland creation or enhancement.

**However, mitigating for wetland destruction is often ineffective and will not adequately replace the functions of wetland habitats being destroyed.** The Washington Department of Ecology has conducted follow-up studies of wetland mitigation and determined that 50% failed in one or more respects (*Wetland Mitigation Replacement Ratios: Defining Equivalency*).

#### **Wetland Mitigation Replacement Ratios: Defining Equivalency**

<https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/documents/92008.pdf>

According to the National Association of Wetland Managers “created wetlands are often more unstable in the landscape than natural wetlands and often quickly fill with sediment. Attempts to create wetlands also quite often fail because it is difficult to ‘get the hydrology’ right.” See Common Questions: *Wetland Restoration, Creation and Enhancement*.

#### **Wetland Restoration, Creation and Enhancement**

[https://www.nawm.org/pdf\\_lib/20\\_restoration\\_6\\_26\\_06.pdf](https://www.nawm.org/pdf_lib/20_restoration_6_26_06.pdf)

In Washington state, a Class IV wetland is a wetland that is small, isolated, and has the least diverse vegetation. These wetlands are often heavily disturbed and have the lowest levels of functions. However, all store water periodically during the year. How much do they store? The answer to that question is found in the *Question & Answers* section below.

**(c) Rational for wetland buffer reduction and filling of Class IV wetlands per the proposed amendment does not consider alternatives that will not degrade wetlands.**

As noted in the [proposed amendment](#), the rational for the amendment is: “(1) maintains capacity for growth inside Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) (2) helps address housing affordability challenges and (3) reduces pressure to expand UGAs in the future.”

**There are a number of alternatives to degrading wetlands that can meet the objectives presented above.**

Some of those alternative include:

- “Building up instead of out” (increasing height restrictions in residential and commercial zones).
- Encouraging development of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADU) by reducing associated permit fees and other means.
- Increasing height limits on Urban Villages now limited to 40-feet to 65-feet+ provide density bonuses for including more affordable housing at those locations.
- Redeveloping commercial properties such as old shopping centers on transit lines into new Urban Villages with business and shopping space on the ground floor above underground parking.
- Using the *Transfer of Development Rights* option to create partnerships between individuals with undeveloped property and commercial builders enabling commercial builders to get affordable housing “density bonuses” and provide a percent of profits to the partners with undeveloped land in exchange for keeping that undeveloped land undeveloped.

**Conclusion: The proposed Critical Areas Regulation (CAR) amendment will result in degraded water quality and reduced water storage in all Snohomish County watersheds.**

In addition, this action will have negative impacts in all county stream/river systems and down stream where County streams flow including the Sammamish River, Lake Washington, Lake Union in King County, the Sammamish River and Lake Washington, Skagit County, and Puget Sound.

Furthermore, there are alternatives to degrading wetlands that (1) maintains capacity for growth inside Urban Growth Areas (UGAs) (2) helps address housing affordability challenges and (3) reduces pressure to expand UGAs in the future.

## Hickey, Lisa

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**From:** Nancy Johnson <jargent6986@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 4:37 PM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** The proposed Critical Areas Regulation (CAR) amendment will harm our wetlands & watersheds!

Hello Council Members,

I hope you will carefully review the proposed CAR and decide to reject it.

Our beloved salmon and orcas need the cleanest, coolest water possible, which requires good-sized buffer areas. Our environment needs plants and trees that will absorb carbon.

According to Washington Department of Ecology analysis in their publication *Wetland Buffers: Use and Effectiveness*, "Buffer widths effective in preventing significant water quality impacts to wetlands are generally 100 feet or greater. Sensitive wetland systems will require greater distances and degraded systems with low habitat value will require less."

Thank you,

Nancy Johnson  
Edmonds



**Hickey, Lisa**

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**From:** Holly K <nallasfan@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 4:47 AM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** NO to Proposed CAR Amendment

Dear Council Members,

Please **do not amend** the current Snohomish County Critical Areas Regulation (CAR) that protects Category IV and Category IV wetlands. Choosing to degrade our water quality, reduce water storage, and compromise watershed/stream/river systems would be extremely negligent. Please vote against the CAR amendment and provide responsible stewardship.

Respectfully,  
Holly Kirkpatrick  
Bothell, WA 98012

## Hickey, Lisa

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**From:** Scarleth Lever <scarlethlever@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 5:25 PM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** Amendment to Snohomish County Critical Areas Regulation

Dear Snohomish County Council,

I am writing to express my strong opposition to the proposed amendment to the Snohomish County Critical Areas Regulation (CAR) that would allow developers to fill Category IV and Category III wetlands. This change will have far-reaching and detrimental effects on our environment, water quality, and community resilience.

Category IV and Category III wetlands play an essential role in Snohomish County's ecosystem by improving water quality, providing flood storage, and supporting habitat for wildlife. Allowing their destruction for short-term development profits undermines the long-term health and sustainability of our watersheds.

The negative impacts of this amendment will not stop at the county line. Degraded water quality and reduced water storage in our watersheds will harm downstream systems, including the Sammamish River, Lake Washington, Lake Union, and Puget Sound. These areas are vital to the broader ecological and economic health of our region.

This proposal is a step backward in our efforts to protect natural resources, address climate change, and ensure a healthy environment for future generations. I urge the council to prioritize sustainable development and reject this harmful amendment.

I also encourage the council to invest in stronger protections for critical areas and to work toward innovative solutions that balance development needs with environmental stewardship.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I hope you will make the right decision for the people, wildlife, and ecosystems of Snohomish County.

Sincerely,

Scarleth Lever

City of Bothell homeowner/Snohomish County resident

## Hickey, Lisa

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**From:** Monica McLaughlin <monicabdiva@frontier.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 6:29 PM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** The proposed Critical Areas Regulation (CAR) amendment will harm our wetlands & watersheds!

My husband and I are totally against this amendment, for the reasons already so eloquently stated in comments submitted by Adopt a Stream and Pilchuck Audubon.

Furthermore, my concerns are how developments often turn out in the construction stage. As a planner at PDS for 30 years I saw first hand the lack of enforcement against developers when they failed to follow through on mitigation measures. Bonds that might have been posted to ensure mitigation was installed and maintained according to plans are never collected if the developers don't follow through. There is little incentive for unscrupulous developers to comply with the code. PDS Staff are under pressure to please developers and get a project approved quickly at the construction stage.

One enforcement case I was aware of took over 20 years for a developer/property owner to comply with mitigating his environmental destruction. Fines were never collected while hours and hours of county staff time was used trying to "gently" make the developer comply. Meanwhile the property owner was able to make a good living at his business for many years without consequence. I was told recently that because of the current lack of county review and inspection staff, developers are now even self certifying some of their work. This is ridiculous. The job of county staff should be to make sure developers comply with county rules. While there are some ethical developers, there are a lot of unethical ones as well. This seems like a recipe for disaster.

Please don't relax environmental protections even more. Choose sound science over developer profit.

Thank you.

Monica McLaughlin  
Bill McLaughlin

**Hickey, Lisa**

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**From:** Patricia Newkirk <patricia.newkirk@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 8:15 AM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** Critical Areas Regulations

I oppose the adoption of any amendments to the Critical Area Regulations that decrease buffer protection and allow filling of certain wetlands.

Please continue to protect our vital wetlands and find other ways to increase density without compromising these areas.

Patricia Newkirk  
Snohomish County Resident  
[patricia.newkirk@gmail.com](mailto:patricia.newkirk@gmail.com)

"Complexity - the marriage of extreme idiosyncrasy of species and the constant fluctuations of a zillion variables in their environment - may be the whole point. "

from "The Light Eaters" by Zoe Schlanger

**Hickey, Lisa**

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**From:** Kay Noble <noblekay@hotmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 8:39 AM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** No to Amendment to Critical Areas Regulation

Council Members,

I am writing to urge you not to pass the amendment to the Critical Areas Regulation before the council this week.

The amendment is clearly bad for the environment, eliminating small wetlands and endangering existing wetlands by reducing the buffers between them and developments.

In recent years, I have observed the council bowing to developers at the expense of the quality of life of your constituents. From zoning changes to lack of investment in infrastructure, most of the changes I see end up negatively impacting long-term residents like me. Please set your sights instead on what benefits your constituents – control graffiti, reduce gang violence, and invest in infrastructure, particularly around over-crowded arteries like 164<sup>th</sup> SW and 128<sup>th</sup> SW.

Please do not pass this amendment – it ultimately has an effect on run-off, stream pollution, salmon survival and even orca survival. Vote for the environment, not the developers.

Thank you,

Kay Noble  
1422 172<sup>nd</sup> PL SW  
Lynnwood, WA 98037  
425-238-2383

## Hickey, Lisa

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**From:** Kelsey Payne <kelsey.payne@snoqualmietribe.us>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 5:08 PM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Cc:** Beazizo, Heidi; Titcomb, Sarah; ENR Review; GASP  
**Subject:** Snoqualmie Tribe Comments- Snohomish County Critical Areas Ordinance Amendments  
**Attachments:** 01\_14\_25\_Snoqualmie\_Tribe\_Comments\_CAO\_Update.pdf

Dear Snohomish County Council,

Please accept these comments pertaining to the Snohomish County Critical Areas Ordinance amendments proposed at the meeting tomorrow on Wednesday, January 15<sup>th</sup> at 10:00am. We ask that the Council consider these comments in their deliberations.

Sincerely,

Kelsey Payne

Kelsey Payne (she/her)  
Water Quality Manager | Snoqualmie Indian Tribe  
PO Box 969 | Snoqualmie, WA 98065  
Email: [kelsey.payne@snoqualmeitribe.us](mailto:kelsey.payne@snoqualmeitribe.us)





January 14<sup>th</sup>, 2025

Snohomish County Council  
Robert J. Drewel Building  
Eighth floor  
3000 Rockefeller Ave., M/S 609  
Everett, WA 98201

Via email to [contact.council@snoco.org](mailto:contact.council@snoco.org)

*Snoqualmie Tribe Comments on Snohomish County Critical Area Ordinance Amendments*

Dear Snohomish County Council:

Please accept these comments on behalf of the Snoqualmie Tribe related to the Snohomish County Critical Areas Ordinance amendments.

The proposed updates to Snohomish County's critical area regulations weaken protections to critical areas, and we ask that the Council deny the current proposed changes to the code. We ask that the County not allow for any buffer width reductions greater than 25% from the standard buffer. Even these standard buffers fall short of what is recommended by Best Available Science, so to whittle them down even further with these suggested changes is to chip away at these vital systems for erosion control, water quality, and wildlife habitat. We also ask that the Council not allow the filling or exemption from standards of wetlands over 1000 square feet, even under circumstances where wetlands are more isolated from other water bodies or wetlands. These isolated wetlands, though they can be degraded habitat, are sometimes the only habitat patches available as green spaces for wildlife, and they also still provide important water retention and filtration ecosystem services.

We refer Snohomish County Council to Snoqualmie Tribe's prior detailed comments, sent on March 17th, 2023, January 29th, 2024, and May 15th, 2024 regarding our dissatisfaction with the current trajectory of the ordinance amendments. We ask Snohomish County Council to take the Snoqualmie Tribe's ancestral relationship with the lands of Snohomish County into account when making decisions that affect people, wildlife, and the shape of the landscape.

Sincerely,



A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Matt Baerwalde".

Matt Baerwalde  
Senior Environmental Policy Analyst  
Snoqualmie Indian Tribe

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Kelsey Payne".

Kelsey Payne  
Water Quality Manger  
Snoqualmie Indian Tribe

CC: [heidi.beazizo@snoco.org](mailto:heidi.beazizo@snoco.org)  
[Sarah.Titcomb@co.snohomish.wa.us](mailto:Sarah.Titcomb@co.snohomish.wa.us)  
[ENRReview@snoqualmietribe.us](mailto:ENRReview@snoqualmietribe.us)  
[GASP@snoqualmietribe.us](mailto:GASP@snoqualmietribe.us)



**Hickey, Lisa**

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**From:** Ann Schmidt <annicedance@icloud.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 10:21 AM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** reduce the standard buffer widths for streams, lakes, marine waters, and wetlands

Greetings,

I am opposed to Jared Mead and Nate Nehring's proposed amendment that would "*reduce the standard buffer widths for streams, lakes, marine waters, and wetlands over 4000 square feet by 50% or 25 feet and in some situations wetlands under 4000 square feet could be completely filled*"

Hopefully this won't pass.

Ann Schmidt  
921 130th St SW D201  
Everett, WA 98204  
annicedance@icloud.com

**Hickey, Lisa**

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**From:** Curtis Spalding <ccspalding@frontier.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 11:34 PM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** Stop Wetlands Amendment. Do Not Reduce Standard Buffer Widths for Streams, Lakes, Marine Waters, Wetlands!

Just say no to this amendment. Doling out “Flexibility” to wealthy land developers will cumulatively cause death for wetland habitats and fisheries and orcas that depend on them.

The science:

*“Buffer effectiveness increases with buffer width.  
Buffers of less than 50 feet in width are generally ineffective in protecting wetlands.  
Buffer widths effective in preventing significant water quality impacts to wetlands are generally 100 feet or greater.”*

Listen to the science. Retain all buffer widths. Read the room. Hear the people. Reject the amendment. Thank you.

— Curtis Spalding  
2621 Hillside Lane  
Everett 98203

**Hickey, Lisa**

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**From:** Nivritti Steenstra <nivritti@anandawashington.org>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 10:02 PM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** The proposed Critical Areas Regulation (CAR) amendment will harm our wetlands & watersheds!

I am urging you to put our wetlands and other unbuilt areas first for protection. This is one of the important ways that makes Snohomish county so livable. Please increase the density of what is already built/disturbed. In Lynnwood I have watched all the new high rise apartments go up. At least they have been built on already used land and in the city area. This is good. People do have to have a place to live. Keep the growth in already urban areas. Leave whatever wildlife habitats that are left, as they are.

Thank you for considering my input.

Sincerely, Catharine Steenstra  
Resident of Lynnwood

## Hickey, Lisa

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**From:** Susanne Villar <sue\_villar@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 9:31 PM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** (CAR debate): Do not change the current rules: The proposed Critical Areas Regulation amendment will harm our wetlands, watersheds, and lakes!

Since clean and plentiful water is necessary for humans, plants, and animals, the Snohomish County Council SHOULD NOT pass the proposed “Critical Areas Regulation amendment” water degradation rule which would allow increased “building over” and “paving over” of areas critical for water filtration and storage. Water availability will be needed as Snohomish County warms and dries in the coming years, and fire danger increases. Birds (which keep insect pests in check) and other animals depend on wetlands of any size and in all seasons. The shade of tall trees in the buffer areas cools the air; green growth absorbs carbon dioxide and provides essential oxygen.

Scientists have found that “replacement” of wetlands at public or private expense has proven to be vastly less effective than keeping the natural areas we already have. Citizens of Snohomish County (including builders) have a responsibility for maintaining or improving the water quality of Sammamish River, Lake Washington, Lake Union, and Puget Sound, not degrading it.

“Needing more land to build houses” next to streams and wetlands, and covering over small wetlands, is not a sufficient reason to change the buffer area rules. There are much better alternatives. People can be housed elsewhere in buildings 15 feet higher than what is allowed now, and also in more accessory dwelling units. The idea of repurposing and upgrading older shopping areas with combined housing/shopping/and services buildings, such as have appeared in Ballard, is a good way to accommodate more people in the areas where services and transportation are readily available. “Green” natural areas should be left alone.

Please vote to keep the Critical Areas Regulations as they are now. DO NOT WEAKEN THEM, as the county and state need the cleanest and most abundant water resources for people, plants, and animals. “More people in the county” means that the county will have AN INCREASED need for more clean water filtering and storage.

Susanne Villar  
601 151st Place SW  
Lynnwood, WA 98087  
425-582-2810

Sent from my iPad

**Hickey, Lisa**

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**From:** Patricia Wangen <shareyourmedicine@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 7:02 PM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** Save the wetlands!

I support "save the wetlands".  
PLEASE protect stream and river systems and watersheds all around Snohomish County and beyond.  
Patricia Wangen  
Bothell  
Sammamish River, Little Bear Creek,  
North Creek. All spawning streams.

Sent from my iPhone

## Hickey, Lisa

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**From:** Countryman, Ryan  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 2:42 PM  
**To:** Hickey, Lisa; Eco, Debbie  
**Subject:** FW: VOTE NO ON PROPOSED ORDINANCE 24-097 AND AMENDMENT 1

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed

For the record.

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**From:** Debbie Wetzel <debbieleewetzel@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 2:20 PM  
**To:** Low, Sam <Sam.Low@co.snohomish.wa.us>; Nehring, Nate <nate.nehring@co.snohomish.wa.us>; Mead, Jared <Jared.Mead@co.snohomish.wa.us>; Dunn, Megan <Megan.Dunn@co.snohomish.wa.us>; Peterson, Strom <Strom.Peterson@co.snohomish.wa.us>  
**Cc:** Countryman, Ryan <Ryan.Countryman@co.snohomish.wa.us>; Michael Whitney <michael.tribune@snoho.com>; eliza.aronson@heraldnet.com; Streamkeeper, Tom <Tomm@streamkeeper.org>; Kristin Kelly <edpas2016@gmail.com>; Michael & Kathy Putt <mkputt@comcast.net>; DOUG GRESHAM <doug.gresham@ecy.wa.gov>; kara.whittaker@dfw.wa.gov; Gene Enick <genick@tulaliptribes-nsn.gov>  
**Subject:** VOTE NO ON PROPOSED ORDINANCE 24-097 AND AMENDMENT 1



**CAUTION.** This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

Proposed Ordinance 24-097 is favorable to the developers and detrimental to the residents and was deliberately crafted to bury critical issues within its 106 pages. It, along with the amendment, must not be approved. If anything, stricter measures to protect wetlands must be put in place.

To claim that it focuses on retaining existing provisions in the code is false when it reduces environmental protection. The assertion that the provisions would help reduce housing costs by enabling more efficient land use is also a lie. Losing unit yield does not correlate with making affordable housing. What it would do is give developers even more profit. The term affordable housing is not even defined in county code and appears to mean affordable for the developers to build, rather than people to buy. In the last 18+ years there have been less than 10 “income based” housing projects submitted and issued by Snohomish County and considered “affordable housing” per RCW 43.185A.010.1. Even then the RCW defines affordable housing as residential housing for rental occupancy, not private home ownership. For reference, there have been thousands of development applications submitted and issued in the last 18+ years, so 99.9% of development applications within Snohomish County are not “affordable housing” or “low-income housing.” Do not confuse this with Snohomish County Code 4.46.010(1) referencing RCW 43.63A.510, which addresses state-owned land affordable housing, not private land. The county-owned Cathcart Crossing property was supposed to have affordable housing as part of the sale and we all know how that turned out since after Horton bought the property the county allowed them to rescind the affordable housing portion of the project. Alleging that the ordinance and amendment will address challenges like unpermitted actions is hilarious since as I speak Horton is violating the Hearing Examiner’s order at Cathcart Crossing at the expense of public safety and PDS will not enforce conditions at the development site.

When Fish & Wildlife, Ecology and even county staff express concerns I think you should listen. Their opposition must be taken seriously. I am certain that none of you have a civil engineering degree or any expertise regarding issues such as the impact of reducing buffers and filling wetlands. It is obvious that you don't know what best applied science is and it seems your position is to simply ignore it. How can the council even consider pushing this ordinance forward without having hard evidence? Stop bowing down to the developers. It is your duty to protect us, yet you fail us at every step. All eyes are on you and it is time for you to do the right thing. Do not vote for the ordinance and the amendment.

--

I remain,  
Deborah Wetzel  
206-261-0941

## Hickey, Lisa

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**From:** Whittaker, Kara A (DFW) <Kara.Whittaker@dfw.wa.gov>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 3:40 PM  
**To:** Hickey, Lisa  
**Cc:** Countryman, Ryan; Stapleton, Timothy R (DFW)  
**Subject:** [SUSPICIOUS ATTACHMENT]WDFW supplemental documents re. Critical Areas Regulations  
**Attachments:** WDFW Supplemental Documents re CARs.zip  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Completed



CAUTION. This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

Dear Ms. Hickey,

WDFW would like to submit the attached supplemental documents to the Snohomish County Council as they continue deliberating amendments to the Critical Areas Regulations. Please include them in the record, confirm receipt of this email and attachments, and let me know if you have any trouble opening them at your soonest convenience.

Thank you,

Kara



**Kara Whittaker, PhD**

(she/her)

[Land Use Conservation & Policy](#) Section Manager  
Ecosystem Services Division

1111 Washington St. SE, Olympia, WA 98501 (physical)

PO Box 43200, Olympia WA 98504-3200 (mailing)

[Kara.Whittaker@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:Kara.Whittaker@dfw.wa.gov)

360-338-5757



## Hickey, Lisa

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**From:** Tamara Wood <tromero01@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Tuesday, January 14, 2025 6:10 PM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** Opposition to Proposed Critical Areas Regulation (CAR) Amendment

Dear Snohomish County Council Members,

I am writing to you as the Groundskeeper at The Clearwater School and a concerned citizen of the North Creek watershed. I sincerely worry about the proposed amendment to the County's Critical Areas Regulation (CAR), weakening wetland protections that are, as they exist today, barely keeping North Creek alive.

As the land steward for the Clearwater School's 4-acre riparian restoration site, I have witnessed firsthand the vital role that wetlands play in the health of our local ecosystem. These critical ecosystems provide crucial habitats for wildlife, sequester carbon, filter pollutants from our waterways, and help mitigate the impacts of flooding, as well as help us through periods of drought. As a student of interdisciplinary studies at The University of Washington Bothell majoring in Environmental Studies and minoring in Ecological Restoration and American Indian Studies, as well as pursuing a double major from Cascadia College in Sustainability, I've learned how essential wetlands are and, once established, have multitudes of benefits, impossible to replicate through the built environment. Detention ponds and underground tanks are unacceptable replacements, and I urge you to find another way to increase housing availability in Snohomish County without sacrificing our trees and waterways.

The proposed amendment, which would reduce buffer zones around wetlands and allow for the filling of smaller wetlands, poses a serious threat to these critical functions.

I understand the need for responsible development, but there are alternative solutions that can meet our community's needs without sacrificing the health of our environment. These may include:

- **Increased density in existing urban areas:** Building upwards instead of outwards can reduce pressure on sensitive natural areas.
- **Supporting alternative housing options:** Encouraging the development of Accessory Dwelling Units (ADUs) and promoting more affordable housing within existing urban areas.
- **Redeveloping existing sites:** Revitalizing underutilized commercial areas can reduce the need for development in sensitive areas.
- **Low-impact development** with a smaller non-permable surface area, like The Clearwater Commons.

I strongly encourage you to rethink this proposed amendment and prioritize the protection of our valuable wetlands. The health of our environment and the well-being of our community depend on it. This is not a matter of choosing between environmental protection and urban development; we can achieve both housing growth and wetland conservation. I urge you to reach out to our organization to explore various ways to find common ground on these important goals.

Sincerely,

Tamara Wood

Groundskeeper, The Clearwater School

Student, UWB and Cascadia College

## Hickey, Lisa

---

**From:** Lucia Ersfeld <lucia.ersfeld@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 15, 2025 9:37 AM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Cc:** Nehring, Nate; Peterson, Strom; Mead, Jared  
**Subject:** Opposition to CRA ordinance amendments

Hello, I know there is not much time before today's county council meeting begins and I am just learning about the proposed amendments to the Critical Area Regulations ordinance that decrease environmental protections for wetlands and conservation areas in order to encourage development. As a Snohomish County resident, I want to express my strong opposition to these amendments. I am supportive of development in order to increase available housing and understand that our county's population is growing rapidly. I also strongly believe in the need to balance development with the management and maintenance of critical forest and wetland habitat, and I know that it is possible to do so with thoughtful planning and oversight from our elected leaders. Thank you,

Lucia Ersfeld

Esperance, WA

## Hickey, Lisa

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**From:** Clara Hsu <viidoves@live.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 15, 2025 4:31 AM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** Reject amendments to Ordinance No. 24-097

Dear Snohomish County Council Members,

I urge the Council to reject the amendments to Ordinance No. 24-097 and instead adopt improved critical areas provisions to better protect rivers and streams and wetlands. I support management of land as a finite resource not as a commodity, since land ownership, whether public or private, carries responsibility for stewardship. These proposed amendments to Ordinance No. 24-097 will damage the functions of critical areas, streams, and lakes in Snohomish County.

Placing critical areas and buffers and building and maintaining fencing to protect buffers are valuable methods of maintaining buffers, but they do not add enough protection to the buffers to justify the buffer reductions.

Allowing buffer averaging that allows buffers to be reduced to 50 percent of the buffer and no less than 25 feet is inconsistent with the best available buffer science and state agency recommendations.

The Amendment Sheet No. 1 amendments on pages 2 and 3 reinstating the allowance for developing non-riparian Category II and III wetlands smaller than 5,000 square feet, and non-riparian Category IV wetlands smaller than 10,000 square feet with wetland reports or mitigation for wetland and habitat loss is not consistent with best available science and violates the Growth Management Act.

Please reject these amendments to Ordinance No. 24-097

Sincerely,

Clara Hsu  
Edmonds

## Hickey, Lisa

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**From:** Holly Hernandez <Hernandihhj@comcast.net>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 15, 2025 10:18 AM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** Critical Areas Regulations proposed amendment

Snohomish County Leadership;

Proposed Ordinance No. 24-097

These change are a very very bad idea! Do not go backwards we need to remedy damage already done to our natural environment not create more impact.

(1) maintains capacity for growth inside Urban Growth Areas There is already enough capacity as reflected in the recently adopted Comprehensive Plan. The existing policy goals and regulation are enough!

(2) helps address housing affordability challenges .This is a problem to be solved but not at the expense of the natural environment. This is a narrative that developers are using disproportionately to maximize their earnings potential.

(3) reduces pressure to expand UGAs in the future.” No that is your job! You as leadership need to hold the line.

Holly Miller-Hernandez  
Snohomish County Citizen  
17531 15<sup>th</sup> Place W  
Lynnwood WA 98036

## Hickey, Lisa

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**From:** Patti Olsen <patti.olsen062@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 15, 2025 3:27 PM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** 1/15 meeting for Ordinance 24-097

Dear Council Members,

Thank you very much for allowing us to voice our concerns today, regarding the amendment to 24-097.

Snohomish residents are passionate about our beautiful County.

I have a question about how we can learn more about what is happening without reading about it in the Everett Herald.

I plead ignorance, maybe there is a summary somewhere that is accessible to us ? If there is, I think people would not feel blindsided by an article in the news.

Is the calendar of your meetings the only place to find out what's in work ?

I just feel like there should be more communication between the Council, and constituents. Is there a newsletter that provides information for all the topics you are working on?

If there is a great communication tool in place, I apologize! I think most people in the meeting today only found out about it from The Herald article last week. Except the builders, they seem to be in the loop more than us. I take responsibility for my ignorance and am looking for ways to better educate myself.

I also am concerned about the potential for misinformation being spread. As an example, I think there was a lot of confusion in the community regarding the proposed property tax increase recently proposed. If I had understood it better, I would have actually been in support of it.

Thank you very much for your service,  
Patti Olsen

Sent from my iPhone

**Hickey, Lisa**

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**From:** walterung <walterung@yahoo.com>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, January 15, 2025 8:26 AM  
**To:** Contact Council  
**Subject:** No to proposed amendments to Ordinance No. 24-097

Dear County Council,

Please do not approve the amendments titled "Amendment Sheet No. 1 to Ordinance No. 24-097." These changes will harm sensitive habitats and Endangered Species Act (ESA)-listed Chinook salmon while offering minimal benefits in terms of increasing buildable areas for affordable housing.

There are better alternatives for creating more affordable housing, such as streamlining the permitting process for accessory dwelling units (ADUs), lifting height restrictions, reducing minimum lot size requirements, incorporating tiny homes into the building code, and exploring other practical solutions that preserve environmental protections.

I urge you to prioritize strategies that balance affordable housing needs with the preservation of critical ecosystems. Please reject Amendment No. 1 to Ordinance No. 24-097.

Thank you,

Walter Rung

## Hickey, Lisa

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**From:** bill liderengineering.com <bill@liderengineering.com>  
**Sent:** Thursday, January 16, 2025 2:50 PM  
**To:** Debbie Wetzel; Low, Sam; Nehring, Nate; Mead, Jared; Peterson, Strom; Dunn, Megan; Eco, Debbie  
**Cc:** Todd Gray; Streamkeeper, Tom; DOUG GRESHAM; kara.whittaker@dfw.wa.gov; Kristin Kelly; Joan Thomas; Mickie Gundersen; eliza.aronson@heraldnet.com; Michael Whitney  
**Subject:** RE: Ordinance 24-097 & Amendment 1 -- Continuation of Hearing/Remand Back to Planning and Community Development Committee PUBLIC NOTICE



CAUTION. This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

The Ord. 24-097 hearing yesterday was a *trainwreck!*

I warned the Council over a month ago not to proceed with this half-baked, last minute, code amendment that would weaken wetland protections; but, the Council decided to go full speed ahead on approval, hoping that the public would not find out about this developer promulgated code change, until it was too late. Now Ord. 24-097 is a wreck on a wreck, that Council wasted 3-hours of everyone's time yesterday, that will now have to be repeated all over again. Things you should different next time:

- Everyone who testified or submitted comments on Ord. 24-097 should receive updates of all documents produced and notification of any committee meetings, legislative actions, or future hearings.
- Future PDS staff documents should be circulated to all parties who provided comments at least **30-days** prior to any hearing to allow adequate time for review and discussion. Any code changes should be in final form, without last minute amendments or revisions.
- Schedule hearings at time when all Councilmembers will be present, the full duration of the hearing. It was extremely rude of some Councilmembers to walk out in the middle of our testimony, in essence giving your constituents the middle finger.
- Public experts should be allowed more time than 3-minutes to refute the one-sided, pro-development PDS presentation provided by Ryan Countryman.
- All of PDS engineers have quit or otherwise left PDS because of harassment to approve projects that they know do not meet code, under Mike McCrary's toxic workplace. PDS engineers are forced to decide if they should do what is ethically required under their professional engineer's license, or approve projects that they know will be harmful to environment and downstream properties under threat of losing their jobs. The Council should retain an independent engineering firm to review all work coming out of PDS.
- Any future ordinance should be clearly written with no ambiguity or amendments.
- Protect small wetlands and all wetland buffers and eliminate buffer width averaging altogether.
- Wetland buffers that were destroyed by previous development must be restored full width as a condition for any redevelopment or new development.



- Councilmembers who are ignorant of wetland issues should attend the training session offered by Tom Murdock and the NW Stream Center, especially Jared Mead.
- Any modification to the Wetland Code should be required to protect WDFW designated [Priority Habitat Species \(PHS\)](#) areas as allowed under the Growth Management Act. PHS information is used primarily by cities and counties to implement and update land use plans and development regulations under the Growth Management Act. All land disturbing activities should be prohibited in PHS areas in Snohomish County.

William Lider, PE, CESCL  
LIDER ENGINEERING, PLLC  
2526 – 205<sup>th</sup> Place SW  
Lynnwood, WA 98036  
425-776-0671 Office  
206-661-0787 Cell

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**From:** Debbie Wetzel <debbieleewetzel@gmail.com>

**Sent:** Thursday, January 16, 2025 11:59 AM

**To:** sam.low@snoco.org; Nehring, Nate <nate.nehring@co.snohomish.wa.us>; jared.mead@snoco.org; strom.peterson@snoco.org; megan.dunn@snoco.org; Eco, Debbie <debbie.eco@snoco.org>

**Cc:** Todd Gray <toddgray@tulaliptribes-nsn.gov>; Tom Murdoch <tomm@streamkeeper.org>; DOUG GRESHAM <doug.gresham@ecy.wa.gov>; kara.whittaker@dfw.wa.gov; Kristin Kelly <edpas2016@gmail.com>; bill liderengineering.com <bill@liderengineering.com>; Joan Thomas <savebothell@outlook.com>; Mickie Gundersen <hilltop.locust@frontier.com>; eliza.aronson@heraldnet.com; Michael Whitney <michael.tribune@snoho.com>

**Subject:** Ordinance 24-097 & Amendment 1 -- Continuation of Hearing/Remand Back to Planning and Community Development Committee PUBLIC NOTICE

I have concerns about providing the public with notice for the continued hearing on this matter. The general public does not get notice of when the Planning and Community Development Committee meets, and they should not be expected to look up the Council Agendas (and review them) to find the new public hearing date, both for the underlying Planning and Community Development Committee meeting and/or GLS and the Council public hearing that will follow. While you might say you will publish in The Everett Herald, the public should not be required to subscribe to the paper to get notice. At the very least, you must send an email to everyone who submitted emails on this issue so they have adequate notice. This must be done for transparency.

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I remain,  
Deborah Wetzel  
206-261-0941