

Critical Areas, Shoreline Buffers & Ecological Protection

Assumptions

- The county will not do future site monitoring, therefore all protection of the environment must occur via the permit process.
- Every inch of shoreline has different needs, therefore, a standard buffer width will not do the best job of protecting the ecology
- Government has a legitimate interest in protecting the environment and in ensuring that incompatible uses do not conflict. It does not have a right to control the aesthetics of a property unless it owns that property

Introduction

- You may build a home as close as 35 feet to the OHWM if you can show your plans at your location will cause no harm to the shoreline ecology.

General Policies:

- 1. Jefferson County shall liberally interpret regulations in order to assist property owners to achieve their intended use of the shoreline in a manner that will not adversely affect the ecology.
- 2. All development must be at least 35 feet landward of the OHWM. All requests for development in the shoreline area must either place the structures the standard buffer distance landward of the OHWM or include an evaluation and management plan from a licensed geotech showing the requested development and its future use has no net current or future impact on shoreline ecology and processes.
- 3. Single-family residences rising less than 35 feet above grade, and their appurtenant structures are permitted in the shoreline area. In the future, shoreline armoring to protect them from erosion will be permitted if that is the only feasible alternative.

Handout from T. Brotherton
at 3-25-09
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GMA