



NOTICE OF DECISION AND DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFICANCE

Planning and Economic Development Department
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Application: 2025 Critical Areas Ordinance Update, Phase 1 | Type IV

Planning File: P-08-04-25-02 **Date of Decision:** Nov 19, 2025 **Effective Date:** Nov 29, 2025

Project Description: The City of Poulsbo undertook an update to its Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) as part of the required periodic review under the Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA), RCW 36.70A.130. The update ensured that the City's critical areas regulations remained consistent with current state law, reflected Best Available Science (BAS), and continued to protect the ecological functions and public health and safety associated with wetlands, fish and wildlife habitat, frequently flooded areas, geologically hazardous areas, and critical aquifer recharge areas. To manage the complexity of the update and meet both statutory and local planning objectives, the City completed the update in two phases: Phase I (2025), which included required updates mandated by state law and guided by the Washington State Department of Commerce, Department of Ecology, and Department of Fish and Wildlife. Phase II (anticipated to begin in 2026), will focus on discretionary amendments identified by the City to improve clarity, address local implementation challenges, and support long-term environmental and regulatory goals.

Review Process: The Poulsbo Planning Commission reviewed the Code Amendments in a public hearing on October 7, 2025, and recommended approval to the City Council. The City Council reviewed and approved the amendments at a duly advertised public hearing on November 19, 2025.

Decision: The City Council has APPROVED the 2025 Critical Areas Ordinance Update, Phase 1. This decision is represented in [Ordinance 2025-19](#).

Appeal Authority: Per RCW 36.70A.290, appeals of development regulations are to be made with the Growth Management Hearings Board by **Friday, January 30, 2026**, per their prescribed requirements and procedures in RCW 36.70A.290.

Examination of File: <https://cityofpoulsbo.com/criticalareasupdate/>

Staff Contact: Nikole Coleman, AICP | Planning Manager | ncoleman@cityofpoulsbo.com

DocuSigned by:

Heather Wright

11/24/2025

Heather Wright, AICP, PED Director

Date

SEPA Determination: The City of Poulsbo (lead agency) has determined that the proposal does not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required under RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c). This decision was made after reviewing a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the lead agency. This information is available to the public on request. This DNS is issued under WAC 197-11-355, Optional DNS Process. There is no further comment period.

Appeal Authority: This SEPA determination may be appealed by filing a written appeal and paying a fee to the PED department no later than **4:30 pm on Friday, December 12, 2025**, in accordance with the procedures set forth in PMC Chapter 19.70.

DocuSigned by:

Heather Wright

11/24/2025

Heather Wright, AICP, PED Director and SEPA Responsible Official

Date

