

CLEARING AND GRADING

Clearing and grading is the activity associated with developing property for a particular use including, but not limited to, commercial, industrial, recreational, and residential uses. Specifically, "clearing" means the destruction or removal of vegetative ground cover including, non-merchantable timber, shrubs, or grasses. "Grading" means the physical manipulation of the earth's surface and/or surface drainage pattern without significantly adding or removing on-site materials. This includes removing the duff layer, all surcharging, preloading and recontouring the ground, and may include minor excavation and filling.

Both activities, clearing and grading, may increase erosion, siltation, runoff/flooding, change drainage patterns, reduce flood storage capacity, and damage habitat. Although it is not technically considered "development" which triggers a substantial development permit, clearing as an activity that impacts shoreline resources is regulated in order to achieve the design goals and objectives of the Shoreline Master Plan, particularly along Shorelines of State-Wide Significance where preservation of natural shoreline characteristics takes a very high priority. For single-family residences, 250 cubic yards of fill may be allowed without a substantial development permit provided all policies and regulations of the Shoreline Master Plan are met.

POLICIES:

1. All clearing and grading activities should be designed and conducted to minimize impacts to wildlife habitat, sedimentation of creeks, streams, ponds, lakes, wetlands, and other water bodies and degradation of water quality.
2. Clearing and grading activities in shoreline areas should be limited to the minimum necessary to accommodate shoreline development.
3. Negative environmental and shoreline impacts of clearing and grading should be avoided wherever possible through proper site planning, construction timing and practices, bank stabilization, bioengineering, and use of erosion and drainage control methods as well as adequate maintenance.

4. Cleared and disturbed sites remaining after completion of construction should be promptly replanted with native vegetation or, in limited circumstances, with other species recommended by the Natural Resource Conservation District.
5. All clearing and grading activities should be designed with the objective of maintaining natural diversity in vegetative species, age, and cover density.
6. For extensive grading proposals, a clearing and grading plan addressing species removal, replanting, irrigation, erosion, and sedimentation control and other methods of riparian corridor protection should be required conforming to the standards for the maximum percentage of site clearing permitted.

REGULATIONS:

1. All clearing and grading activities shall be limited to the minimum necessary for intended development, including residential development. A grading/clearing plan may be required, when deemed appropriate by the Administrator.
2. Clearing and grading activities may only be permitted when associated with an allowable shoreline development or use, PROVIDED that upon completion of construction, remaining cleared areas shall be replanted with native vegetation. Replanted areas shall be maintained such that within three years the vegetation is fully re-established.
3. Normal non-destructive pruning and trimming of vegetation for maintenance purposes shall not be subject to these clearing and grading regulations. In addition, clearing by hand held equipment of invasive non-native shoreline vegetation or plants listed on the State Noxious Weed List is permitted in shoreline locations if native vegetation, or other species recommended by the Natural Resource Conservation District, is promptly re-established in the disturbed area.
4. Any significant placement of materials from off-site, or substantial creation or raising of dry upland shall be considered landfill land shall also comply with the landfill policies and regulations of the Klickitat County Shoreline Master Plan.

5. For Shorelines of State and County Significance:

- a. OHWM to 50 feet landward on a horizontal plane from the OHWM - Grading and clearing requires a Shorelines Conditional Use Permit.
- b. 50 to 100 feet landward on a horizontal plane from the OHWM - Grading and clearing is permitted provided 75% of this vegetation buffer area shall be left undisturbed, or will be enhanced (as determined by the Planning Department).
- c. 100 to 200 feet landward on a horizontal plane from the OHWM - No restrictions on grading or clearing.
- d. Grading and clearing use limitation on shoreline environments:

NATURAL - prohibited

CONSERVANCY - permitted as defined above

RURAL - permitted as defined above

COMMUNITY - permitted as defined above

URBAN/INDUSTRIAL - permitted as defined above