

## **PRELIMINARY CRITICAL AREAS DETERMINATION** **(PCAD)**

### **What a Landowner Can Expect From a PCAD:**

The Preliminary Critical Areas Determination (PCAD) can be used to determine if wetlands, streams, bluffs or other critical areas are located on or near your property. This assessment will lead to a preliminary determination that will inform you what rules apply to your property without having to formally apply for a permit. A PCAD will take approximately 10 days to complete, however you have an option to have expedited review for an additional fee.

You will be provided with a written summary of observed Critical Areas, wetland type and ranges of buffer widths that may influence a development proposal. You will also be provided a copy of a map that the County has on record. The findings of the PCAD will be honored for 5 years unless something dramatic changes on the site. The final wetland buffer size is dependant on the land use intensity resulting from the manner in which the property is developed. For more information about wetland types, buffer widths, and land use intensity, please reference Island County's "*Wetlands I.D. Guide*", which is available at [www.islandcounty.net/planning/gettingstarted.htm](http://www.islandcounty.net/planning/gettingstarted.htm).

This investigation is intended to provide information so you can make informed decisions, create a preliminary site map and prepare a development proposal consistent with Island County Code without having to initially hire a professional consultant. The County will not draw your site plan, measure buffers, or determine buildable area; nor will Island County delineate the exact edge of the entire wetland. However, we will hang a few flags that show the boundary.

This service is likely to expedite future development proposal review because many of the Critical Areas issues will have already been resolved and the site visited. In other words, the County will have already verified Critical Areas and won't need to redo the review when you submit a permit.

Please note that this PCAD process is not intended to review land uses proposals. The County has a Pre-Application process designed as a cost effective option to review preliminary land use proposals. This Pre-Application form is available on the Planning Department's website.

### **How to Apply for a PCAD:**

Please fill out the top section and submit the PCAD Summary of Findings form accompanied by the fee and the information noted below. If you do not own the property, you will need to obtain all current landowner(s) signature on the Summary of Findings form to allow the County to access the property.

Please submit any information that can aid in an accurate evaluation and minimize the amount of time needed to assess the parcel. Information that is necessary includes the following:

- Preliminary site plan showing the entire parcel, top and toe of slopes, low areas, ravines, streams and ditches
- Old wetland delineation reports
- Locations of suspected critical areas
- Existing structures, driveways, wells, septic systems, etc.
- If possible, please submit the Field Indicators Worksheet, which can be found in the back of the Wetland I.D. Guide

This information will allow the Planning Department to better serve the landowner and provide a more accurate and relevant determination. A cursory site plan map can be a rough sketch and does not need to be to scale, although a map drawn to scale is preferred

If the parcel is densely vegetated and accessing the entire lot is difficult, we ask that you create small trails throughout the parcel, especially to provide access to low areas and places where water collects or might flow. A very small (machete) path one or two feet wide is all that is needed to facilitate access.

### **ISLAND COUNTY PLANNING AND COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT**

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