

Native Vegetation Protection

Low-Impact Development Code Update

Thurston County
Community Stakeholder Group

January 27, 2016



Background

- Native vegetation and soils provide natural stormwater management and pollutant removal
- Trees and native vegetation intercept 40-50% precipitation; once removed, the ground has to infiltrate much more water

Background

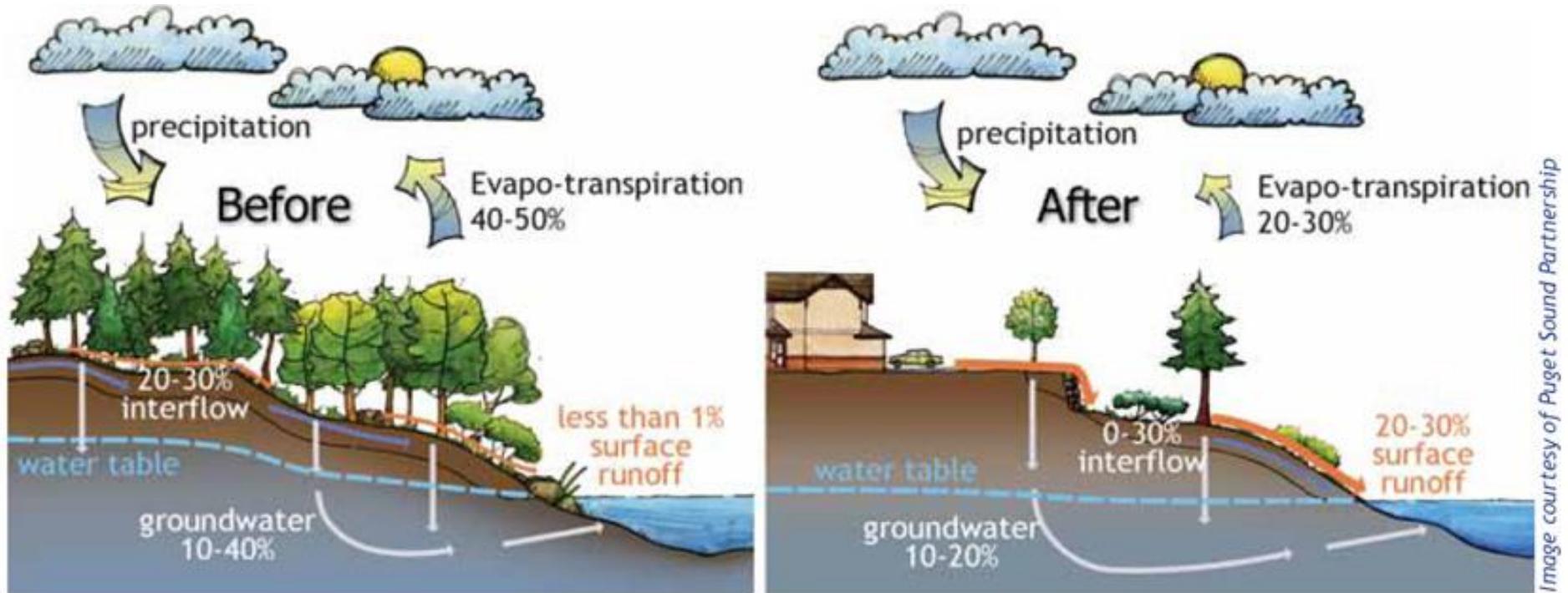


Image courtesy of Puget Sound Partnership

Before development almost all rainfall is taken up by plants, evaporates or infiltrates through the ground. After conventional development, surface runoff increases significantly while evaporation and infiltration into the ground decrease.

Focus on Vegetation Protection

- Are there regulatory controls over tree clearance and removal of mature trees/forest stands?
- Is there an existing ordinance that requires or encourages the preservation of vegetation?
- Can the code be revised to place greater emphasis on preservation of conifers?
- Can the code include strategies to orient retained vegetation and open space to disconnect impervious surfaces?
- Is wholesale clearing of sites prohibited or limited?

Focus on Vegetation Protection

- Forest Practices permit
 - Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater UGAs: 5,000 square feet of clearing;
 - 5% tree tract required
 - Outside North UGAs: 5,000 board feet of clearing
 - No tree tract required
- Olympia UGA
 - R 1/5 – Retain 60% of site in tree tract
 - RLI 2-4 – Retain 60% of site in tree tract
- Lacey, Olympia, Tumwater UGAs (based on city requirements)
 - Require tree protection plans

Focus on Vegetation Protection

- Cluster Subdivisions
 - Planned Residential Development
 - Grand Mound UGA, RR 1/5, MGSA
 - 30% Open Space requirement
 - Planned Rural Residential Development
 - Resource Use Parcel
 - LTA: 85%
 - Nisqually Agriculture: 90%
 - LTF: 75%
 - RR 1/5: 60%
 - Resource Use parcels
 - Agriculture
 - Forest practices
 - Recreation
 - One residence



Focus on Vegetation Protection

- Snohomish County: Tree Canopy Ordinance
 - Required within UGAs
 - Requirements apply to all properties whether they have existing tree canopy or not – replanting required
 - Director can reduce canopy requirement by 5%; Credits

Type of Development	Tree Canopy Coverage
Subdivisions, 10 or more lots	30%
Short Subdivisions, 4-9 lots	25%
Short Subdivisions, <4 lots	20%
Single-family Detached, Townhouses, Cottages, Multifamily, 10+ units	20%
Single-family Detached, Townhouses, Cottages, Multifamily, < 10 units	15%
Urban Center	15%

Focus on Vegetation Protection

- Pierce County: Native Vegetation Area Retention Standards
 - Required in all Urban and Rural Zones
 - Remodels greater than 60% of building value
 - A percentage required to be retained or restored to a native vegetative condition, based on zone
 - Exceptions for agricultural activities, less than 1,000 sq ft of clearing
 - Requirements tied to Open Space Corridor plan

Zone Classification	Minimum Native Vegetation Retention
Urban	15-20%
Residential Resource	25%
Rural Village Center	25%
Rural 10, 20, 40, Sensitive Resource, Agricultural Resource	65%

Native Vegetation Options

- Increase tree preservation above 5% in UGAs
- Require tree preservation area for forest conversions outside North County UGAs
- Require cluster-style developments in certain zones
 - Include resource parcel specifications for R 1/20, R 1/10
- Develop a tree/vegetation preservation ordinance that applies for areas outside UGAs
- Allow other code changes to incentivize native vegetation protection

Discussion

- What barriers do you see for protecting vegetation during site design?
- Are there incentives that could better encourage retention or replanting of native vegetation?
- Other thoughts and comments?

