



Residential Development

Does the SMP apply to my property?

Some or all of your shoreline property may be affected. A number of waterbodies in Skamania County are regulated by the SMP, including the Columbia River, Washougal River, Wind River, and other streams, lakes, and associated wetlands. Generally speaking, shoreline jurisdiction (where the SMP applies) includes the in-water areas and the adjacent land 200 feet upland along designated shorelines and within associated wetlands. The approximate shoreline jurisdictional areas are shown on the [SMP Appendix A maps](#) and the [County's online map portal](#).

When is a shoreline exemption or permit required?

Projects located in shoreline jurisdiction may require a shoreline substantial development permit (SSDP). Projects that do not require this permit are called shoreline exemptions.

Exemptions that commonly apply to single-family residential uses include:

- ⊕ Normal maintenance and repair of an existing home and appurtenances (garages, driveways, septic systems, decks, utilities, fences, septic tank installations, and limited grading)
- ⊕ Construction of one single-family home or appurtenances for the use of you and your family

The term **exemption** can be confusing for applicants. If your residential project qualifies for an exemption, it means that you are exempt from the SSDP process, but not the requirements of the SMP.

Exemptions are commonly reviewed concurrently with your building permit and may require that you submit additional materials such as a critical area report, vegetation management plan, or an archaeological site evaluation. If your project requires in-water work, such as a dock, the County will issue a formal letter of exemption in addition to your building permit or other residential permit documents.

If your project does not meet the exemption criteria, then you will need to obtain an SSDP. Some types of residential accessory structures (docks, piers, floats, and boat launches) may require a conditional use permit. If you are proposing to exceed or vary from any of the SMP standards (e.g., setbacks, height), a shoreline variance may be required.

New, altered, and expanded residential uses and appurtenant structures are subject to SMP standards such as setbacks, density and height requirements, and vegetation conservation.



Quick Reference

This handout should be used in partnership with the adopted [Skamania County Shoreline Master Program](#) and the Property Owners Handbook.

SMP Reference

- + **Letters of Exemption:**
[Section 2.6](#)
- + **Residential Development:**
[Table 5-1 and Section 5.3](#)
- + **Public Access:**
[Section 3.6](#)
- + **Vegetation Conservation:**
[Section 3.7](#)

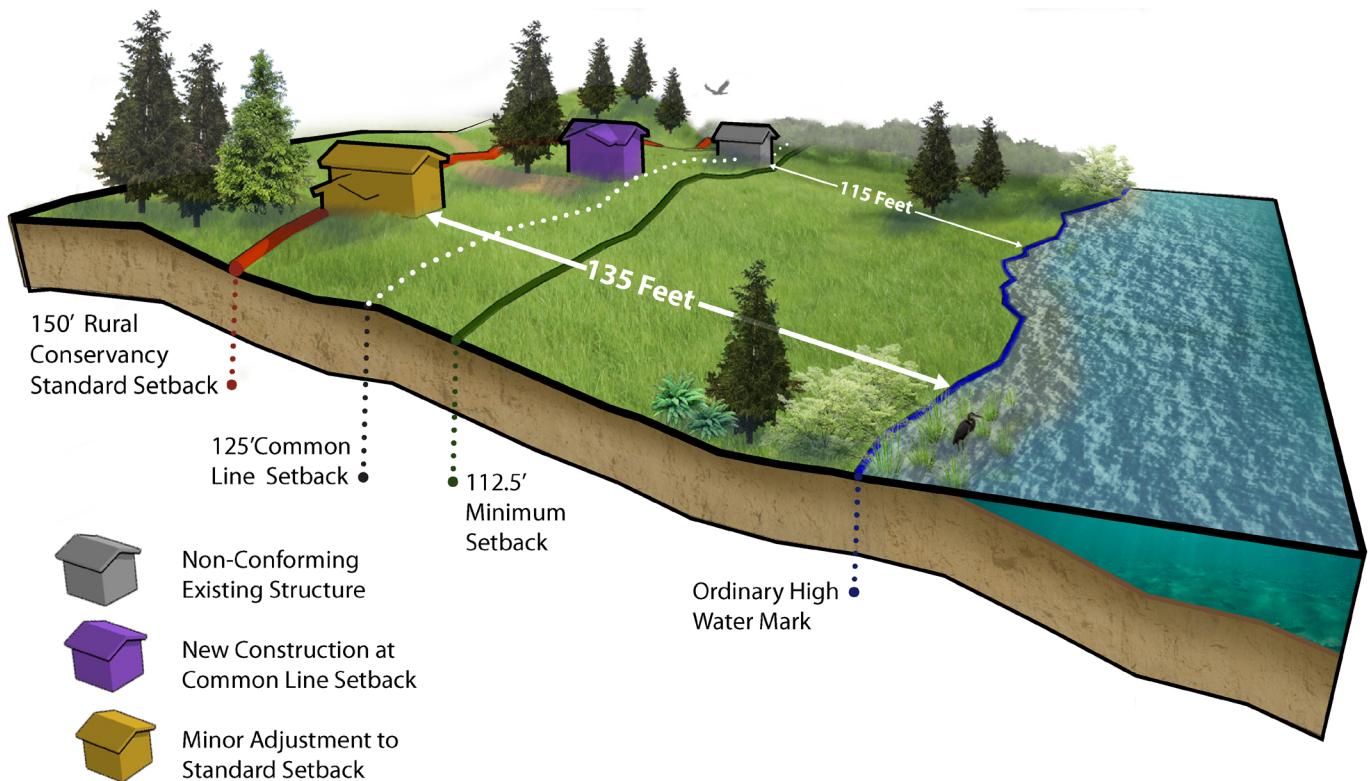


Questions

Skamania County Community Development

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Common SMP standards

- ⊕ **Setbacks:** the distance that residential structures and appurtenances must be located from the water. Standard setbacks for residential uses range from 60 to 150 feet, depending on the shoreline environment designation. The SMP allows for both minor adjustments to, and larger reductions of, setbacks if adjacent residences are closer to the shoreline ("common-line" setbacks) and if there are unique conditions on your property under the shoreline variance process. Non-conforming structures that do not meet current setbacks may be expanded or rebuilt as long as the expansion does not intrude further into a setback or critical area or buffer.
- ⊕ **Density:** the number of residential units per lot size, regulated by the [County's zoning ordinance](#).
- ⊕ **Height:** Shoreline residential uses are limited to 35 feet tall.
- ⊕ **Vegetation conservation:** All shoreline uses, including residential uses, that remove native or non-native vegetation are required to mitigate this removal. Depending on the location and type of vegetation removed, replanting is required at ratios ranging from one to three times the area that was removed. See the County's Vegetation Management Handout for details.

Am I required to provide public access?

In most cases, development of an individual home or up to 4 lots/homes does not require public access. Public access is typically required for subdivisions with 5 or more lots/homes and projects carried out by a public entity as opposed to private landowners. In addition, access is not required when it is shown to be incompatible due to reasons of safety, security, or impact on the shoreline environment. If there is an existing public access on your property, you must preserve it or provide another means of access.



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