



## What is the The Livestock Management Ordinance?

The primary purpose of The Livestock Management Ordinance (King County Code 21A.30) is to support the raising and keeping of livestock in a manner that minimizes the adverse impacts of livestock on the environment, particularly on water quality and salmon habitat.

### Why is this Ordinance Necessary?



**Streambanks:** Trampling streambank vegetation exposes soil and causes erosion. The loss of streamside plants results in water too warm for fish and fewer places for fish to hide from predators.



**Manure:** Nutrients from manure, transported by rainwater into streams and wetlands, decrease water quality and encourage aquatic weeds which choke stream channels and decrease oxygen available for fish.

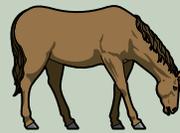


**Sediment:** Livestock stir up stream bottoms, increasing water turbidity (cloudiness) and covering gravel beds where fish spawn.

### What are the rules?

#### How much land?

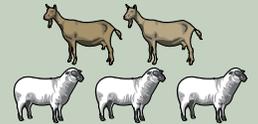
The lot size required to keep a large animal is 20,000 square feet (0.46 acre). The actual area of the site available for use by the livestock may be less than 20,000 square feet.



A large animal is an adult horse or bovine.



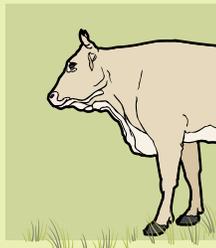
One large animal is equal to five small animals.



Small animals include sheep, goats, pigs, miniature horses, feeder calves, and alpacas.

#### How many animals?

**1** large animal on 2 acres



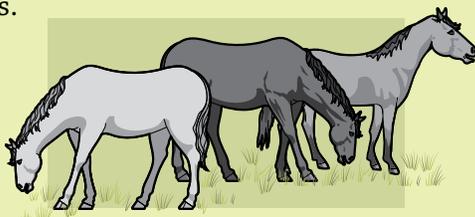
One large animal per two acres if you:

- Just follow the ordinance rules for manure management.

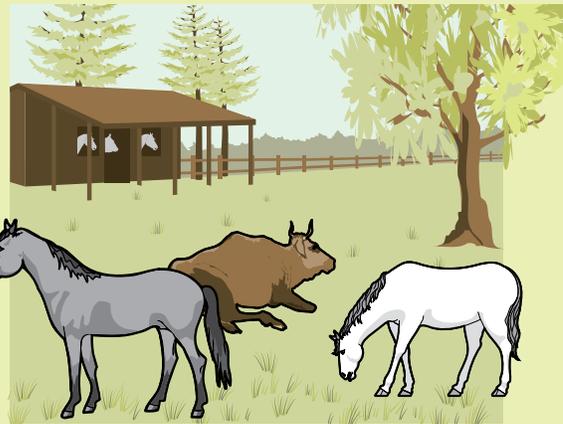
**3** large animals on 1 acre

Three large animals per acre if you:

- Don't get a Farm Management Plan but do follow the Ordinance management standards.



**6** large animals with maximum 3 animals grazing on uncovered grazing at one time on 1 acre



Six large animals per acre if you:

- Follow Ordinance management standards or get a Conservation District Farm Management Plan and
- Have a covered confinement area and
- Keep no more than three animals per acre on uncovered grazing areas at one time.

*If you want to add animals that exceed the limits, you can apply for a conditional use permit.*

# You have a choice

## Do you need a Farm Management Plan?

You probably **DO NOT** need a Farm Management Plan if:

1. You have no more than one large animal per two acres of land, and
2. You do not have an aquatic area (stream) or wetland on your property.

*You do need to follow the management standards for confinement areas, animal density and manure storage.*

**What if you don't want a Farm Management Plan? See page 3.**

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## What does a Farm Management Plan recommend?

*Farm Management Plans must be prepared by the King Conservation District or another authorized entity. A Plan must address the following:*

### What about Livestock access to natural ponds, type S and F aquatic areas and category I, II or III wetlands?

- Plans generally recommend a 25 foot buffer.
- Buffer averaging is allowed to accommodate existing structures, but the buffer cannot be less than 10 feet.
- There can be properly designed access areas for livestock watering, but not free access along the water body.

### How should pastures be cared for?

- Plans outline good pasture management practices for your site conditions. Plans generally recommend a 25 foot, heavily vegetated buffer between grazing areas and any aquatic area or wetland.

### What about confinement areas?

- Within 200 feet uphill of a type S or F water, a confinement area must maintain a 25 foot buffer of diverse, mature vegetation plus an additional 20 foot buffer.
- For properties less than 2.5 acres with existing confinement areas, buffer widths may be flexible to retain a 25 foot buffer wherever possible. In this case, remove manure from the confinement area daily from October 15 through April 15.

### What should be done about manure?

- Plans include practices that avoid having manure accumulate within 10 feet of type N or O waters.
- Plans recommend that drainage ditches do not channel waste to streams or wetlands.



# What if you don't want a Farm Management Plan?

If you choose not to have a Plan prepared, you must follow Ordinance management standards which, as summarized here, are stricter.

## What about Livestock access to natural ponds, type S and F aquatic areas and category I, II or III wetlands?

- A 50 foot protected, vegetated buffer is required.
- You can reduce this buffer width to 25 feet if the area has existing diverse, mature vegetation.
- Fenced buffers established before 1990 or in accordance with a Farm Management Plan, are acceptable.

## How should grazing areas and pastures be cared for?

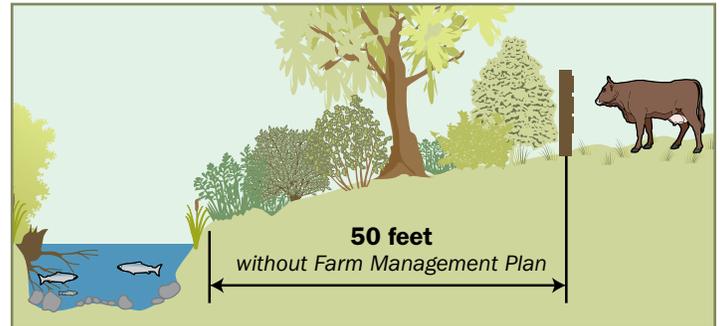
- From October 1 through April 30, grazing areas that are within 200 feet of type S or F waters or category I, II and III wetlands may not be plowed. Noxious weeds can be removed as long as other vegetation in the buffer is undamaged.

## What about confinement areas?

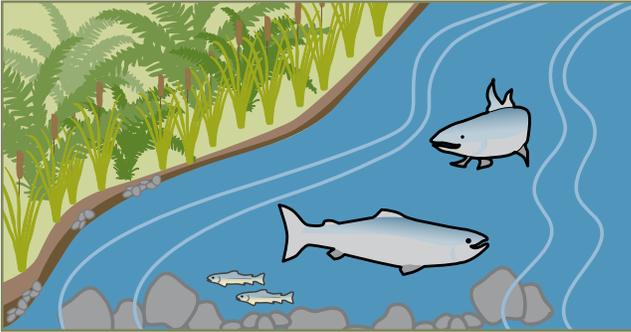
- A confinement area further than 200 feet from an aquatic area or wetland requires no buffer.
- A confinement area cannot be within the buffer of any type S or F water or wetland required by the critical areas ordinance in effect at the time of construction, unless built before 1990.
- A confinement area cannot be within 50 feet of the wetland edge of any category I, II or III wetland or the ordinary high water mark of any type S or F water.
- Confinement areas within 200 feet uphill of any type S or F water or category I, II or III wetlands must have an additional 20 foot vegetated filter area of heavy grasses, ground cover or trees between the confinement area and the stream or wetland.
- Any building in the confinement area must have roof drains and divert the water away from the confinement area.

## What should be done about manure?

- Maintain a minimum 100 foot setback for manure piles uphill from a wetland, aquatic area or ditch. This may be reduced to 50 feet if the manure pile is part of an active composting system, on an impervious surface and includes a leachate containment system.
- Direct surface water away from manure storage areas.
- Cover or contain manure stored within 200 feet uphill of any type S or F water or category I or II wetland. Containers may be a manure lagoon, concrete bunker, dumpster or any other structure that prevents the runoff from reaching streams or wetlands.
- Spread manure on the field only during the growing season and never when the ground is saturated or frozen.



Funding may be available for qualifying landowners to help meet standards of the Ordinance. Please see the **For More Information** section on page 5.



## More about aquatic areas (streams) and wetlands

**Type S waters** are shorelines of the state and include all marine shorelines, rivers with flows over 20 cubic feet per second (cfs), and lakes larger than 20 acres.

**Type F waters** are natural water bodies that contain fish habitat. A stream segment is presumed to contain fish habitat if: (1) it is more than 2 feet wide; (2) it has a gradient of less than 20 percent; and (3) it has no natural blockage to fish passage downstream.

**Type N waters** are other natural waters that flow to Type S or F waters.

**Type O waters** are natural waters that do not flow to Type S, F, or N waters.

**Wetlands are placed in one of four categories, according to their functions and values:**

**Category I wetlands** are wetlands that:

- represent a unique or rare wetland type;
- are more sensitive to disturbance than most wetlands;
- are relatively undisturbed and contain ecological attributes that are impossible to replace within a human lifetime; or
- provide a high level of functions.

**Category II wetlands** are more common than Category I wetlands, but still require a high level of protection; are difficult, though not impossible, to replace and provide high levels of some functions.

**Category III wetlands** occur more frequently than Category I or II wetlands, but are difficult to replace and require a moderate level of protection. They are often less diverse or more isolated from other natural resources in the landscape than Category II wetlands. Category III wetlands are:

- wetlands with a moderate level of functions; and
- interdunal wetlands between 0.1 and 1 acre in size.

**Category IV wetlands** have the lowest levels of functions and are often heavily disturbed. These are wetlands that can generally be successfully replaced and, in some cases, are able to be improved.

## Some Other Provisions of the Ordinance

**Dairies:** The County Council excluded licensed dairies because they are covered under the Washington State Dairy Nutrient Management Act. Farmers who that don't have a dairy license are required to follow the Ordinance.

**Clearing for pastures:** If you are clearing forested lands for pasture, you are required to observe the Critical Areas Ordinance setbacks for streams and wetlands.

**Livestock housing setbacks from property boundaries:** You cannot house livestock closer than 25 feet to any boundary line. This distance is increased to 90 feet for swine.

## Our Responsibility

Maintaining and enhancing the viability of fisheries, livestock-raising and farming are essential to the long-term economic vitality, recreation opportunities and quality of life in rural and resource lands of King County.

## Additional Manure Management Regulations

King County Code 21A.12.122 requires that manure storage be at least 35 feet from a property boundary.

## King County Livestock Management Code

[www.kingcounty.gov/council/legislation/kc\\_code.aspx](http://www.kingcounty.gov/council/legislation/kc_code.aspx)

Alternative formats available.  
Call 206-296-6519 or TTY: 711.

## For More Information

**For questions about the Livestock Management Ordinance and livestock management:**

**King County Livestock Program**  
206-263-6566

201 S. Jackson Street, Suite 600  
Seattle, WA 98104

[www.kingcounty.gov/wlr/agriculture-program/livestockprograms.aspx](http://www.kingcounty.gov/wlr/agriculture-program/livestockprograms.aspx)

**For Farm Management Plans and implementation funding options:**

**King Conservation District**  
425-282-1900

1107 SW Grady Way, Suite 130  
Renton, WA 98057

[www.kingcd.org](http://www.kingcd.org)

**For questions about the Critical Areas Ordinance and enforcement of the Livestock Management Ordinance:**

**King County Department of Development and Environmental Services**  
206-296-6600

**For questions specifically related to clearing: 206-296-6759**

900 Oakesdale Avenue SE  
Renton, WA 98057

[www.kingcounty.gov/property/permits.aspx](http://www.kingcounty.gov/property/permits.aspx)



**King County**

Department of Natural Resources and Parks  
Water and Land Resources Division

**Livestock Program**

201 South Jackson Street, Suite 600  
Seattle, WA 98104

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