

How is shoreline use defined?

Land use in shoreline areas refers to current uses, broader land use patterns throughout the county and special consideration of water-oriented uses. Water-oriented uses are encouraged in shoreline areas.

There are three types of water-oriented uses: water-dependent, water-related and water-enjoyment. Below are State definitions and examples.

1. Water-dependent use refers to a shoreline use that cannot exist in a location that is not adjacent to water due to the nature of its function, such as shipyard dry docks, marinas and ferry terminals.
2. Water-related use refers to a shoreline use that isn't necessarily dependent on a waterfront location but its economic vitality is dependent upon a waterfront location, such as vessel parts fabrication, container ship yards and fish hatcheries.
3. Water-enjoyment use refers to recreational use or the ability for the general public to access the shoreline for aesthetic enjoyment of the shoreline, such as a restaurant or resort. See our public access and recreation page for more information.

What type of shoreline use and zoning currently exists?

In general, the amount of commercial use in King County's shoreline areas is minimal. The vast majority of unincorporated shorelines in the County are zoned for rural residential or resource purposes (including forestry and agriculture) or otherwise set aside as open space. (See Land Use table below.)

Of the 2,019 permits issued by DDES since the early 1990s:

- 562 permits were issued for single family dwellings;
- 355 permits were issued for a wide range of new shoreline development activities such as grading, trails, utility lines, roads, churches, docks and piers and bulkheads; and
- 1,103 permits were issued for maintenance or repair of existing shoreline structures, timber harvest and stormwater management.

Note that multiple permits may have been granted for a single parcel.



Preliminary Results of Current Land Uses and Land Use Patterns on King County's Unincorporated Shoreline Jurisdiction

Current Land Uses

Residential docks: 102 marine, 1182 freshwater
 Private boat ramps (data available for marine areas only): 58
 Parcels with current commercial uses (Assessor's Office): 97
 Parcels with current water-oriented uses: 67

Facilities and Utilities

Sewer/stormwater outfalls: 270
 Regional stormwater facility: 6
 Residential/commercial stormwater facility: 42
 Sewer lines: 11.5 miles
 King County-maintained levees/revetments: 501 levee/115
 revetment miles
 Pipelines: 195 feet
 Railroads: 17 miles
 King County roads: 131 miles
 Ferry terminals: 2

Land Use Patterns

Shoreline permits issued (DDES) since early 1990s: 2,019 permits
 Agricultural Production District: 18,470 acres
 Forest Production District: 41,760 acres
 Zoning:
 Urban: 3,261 acres
 Rural: 19,085 acres
 Resource: 50,200 acres
 Open: 12,650 acres