



Environmental Consulting Services

The Development Services Department has contracted with a qualified environmental consultant to provide services related to the identification and characterization of environmentally sensitive features to help customers comply with critical areas regulations and to protect critical area functions.

To receive these services, you'll need to place a deposit into a city account. The consultant is then paid on a time and materials basis from this account. Any unused deposit is then refunded. The costs are described on the "Request for Environmental Consulting Services," posted on the city's website.

These services are being available in order to provide:

- Project planning tools that customers need,
- Deliverables that meet city requirements, and
- Competitive and transparent pricing.

You can, of course, select your own qualified environmental consultant if you wish. If you work with your own consultant, the city may, in some instances, use its third-party consultant to review the products for compliance with existing regulations.

For assistance in determining the appropriate level of service for your project, contact a land use professional in the Development Services Center.

- 1 Site reconnaissance on sites smaller than two acres** that are easily accessed due to vegetation and topography – This service is for property owners seeking information about the presence or absence of critical areas to help them in the early stages of project scoping and feasibility. A site visit will be performed to identify potential wetlands, streams and riparian corridors, sensitive fish and wildlife habitat, and conditions associated with geologic hazards and steep slopes. Dominant plant species, soil conditions, evidence of hydrologic conditions, and habitat suitability for fish and wildlife will be collected and recorded. A short memo of findings will be prepared describing conditions observed on site.
- 2 Site reconnaissance on sites larger than two acres** or sites that require additional time and labor to access due to vegetation and topography – This service is similar to the reconnaissance-level site assessment described in #1 above and also results in a memo of findings. It is for larger, more challenging sites that require more time and effort.
- 3 Basic wetland or stream delineation services for sites smaller than two acres** that do not require extensive study and are easily accessed due to vegetation and topography – This service is for properties that contain, or are likely to contain, critical areas where more-detailed information is needed regarding their location, extent and category to assist with site planning decisions. This includes the completion of background and field research; field flagging; mapping of critical area boundaries using GPS equipment; the completion of the appropriate rating forms; and the typing of the wetland or stream per the city's standards. The result is a basic report of findings that includes a brief discussion of methods, site conditions, and City of Bellevue regulatory category and buffer; along with a simple site map. It would be sufficient for the subsequent development of basic mitigation and restoration plans for buffer disturbance associated with allowed uses. This report would not include a functional assessment or mitigation plans associated with direct impacts; nor would it meet the full reporting requirements of the Washington State Department of Ecology. The field flags could be surveyed at a later date, if needed.

4 **Basic wetland or stream delineation services for sites larger than two acres** or for sites that require additional labor and time to access due to vegetation and topography – This service, similar in scope to #3 described earlier, is for larger sites with more challenging characteristics.

5 **Ordinary high water mark (OHWM) determination** – This service is for lakeshore property owners that need to know the location of the OHWM for the purposes of locating shoreline protective structures and possibly upland improvements. This includes research, documentation and the placement of field flagging in accordance with guidance provided by the Washington Department of Ecology (DOE). The result is a letter report and site map that presents the findings of the determination. In most cases, field flags need to be surveyed by the consultant’s licensed surveyor as an additional service or by an alternate firm selected by the project applicant. An OHWM determination is required for the placement of bulkheads. Lake Sammamish shoreline property owners are allowed to use a predetermined lake elevation for the placement of upland structures.

6 **Full wetland or stream delineation report** – This service expands on the basic reports described in #3 or #4 by fully documenting the delineation process and the indicators used in establishing the wetland or stream boundary and associated category or typing. This service is for complex projects where the development is proposing to encroach into wetland or stream critical area buffers, which requires mitigation and restoration, or where the project is controversial and an appeal is probable. This not only includes the background and field research, field flagging, rating forms, and typing

per Bellevue and state standards included in the #3 and #4; but also meets the full reporting requirements of the DOE. The report will include a detailed site description, description of methods, description of existing information, wetland / stream descriptions and data sheets, wetlands rating forms, a functional assessment, and a regulatory discussion—including federal and state permitting requirements. This service should be used in situations when a complete project file is essential. In most cases, field flags will need to be surveyed—either by the consultant’s licensed surveyor as an additional service or by an alternate firm selected by the project applicant. The consultant’s senior staff scientist/biologist will take the lead on the field study and report preparation for this work.

7 **Additional on-call services related to critical areas** – These services sometimes follow one or more of the services described above, depending on the property and the project.

- a. A **Critical Areas Report** that meets the requirements in LUC 20.25H.230. This also includes the development of mitigation and restoration plans required to offset unavoidable project impacts and restore temporary impacts.
- b. **Wildlife habitat assessments** in accordance LUC 20.25H.165 and the Bellevue Urban Wildlife Habitat Literature Review and Functional Assessment Model.
- c. Preparation of a **“Floodplain Habitat Assessment”** that meets the requirements of the Endangered Species Act for fisheries as clarified in the National Marine Fisheries Service’s September 22, 2008, Biological Opinion.



If you have questions or need additional information, please contact the Land Use Desk in the Development Services Center at 425-452-4188 or landusereview@bellevuewa.gov.