

POLICY #8
**POLICIES FOR PARKS, RECREATION
OPEN SPACE AND NATURAL LANDS**

To protect the rural and scenic character of Island County and to ensure that both urban and rural residents of the County have reasonable access to and opportunities for outdoor recreation, it is the policy of the county and the Municipalities that:

1. Each jurisdiction intends to include a park, recreation and open space element in its GMA Comprehensive Plan. These elements shall be coordinated and, where appropriate, the County and each of the cities should adopt level of service standards and definitions. Capital facility plans for funding and acquisition of new parks and recreation facilities should also be coordinated between the county and each of the cities to ensure efficient and effective use of public funds.
2. Establish a county-wide system of non-motorized trails. Trails would be established on a region wide basis.
3. Identify, establish and protect open space corridors and greenbelts within and between urban growth areas through (a) public acquisition of fee or lesser interests in these corridors by purchase donations, incentives such as density bonuses; and (b) by use of the open space tax program.
4. Develop and adopt a County-wide plan for the preservation and acquisition of lands for open space, recreation, and natural resources (Natural Lands Plan) that can serve as an "implementation umbrella" for municipal plans with open space components. The Plan should prioritize voluntary acquisition of sites based upon their conservation, open space, or recreation value. The Plan should coordinate implementation programs to acquire and protect these identified sites. The plan should implement County Comprehensive Plan policies regarding protection of the rural character and livability of Island County by protecting open space corridors, areas that are important to separate and define urban growth areas, and areas of more intensive rural development.
5. To preserve open space and create recreational opportunities by innovative incentives and/or regulatory techniques such as, but not limited to, purchase of developments rights, conservation easements, land trusts and community acquisition of lands for public ownership shall be encouraged.
6. The use of open space taxation laws shall be evaluated as a useful method of land use control and resource preservation.

COUNTY WIDE PLANNING POLICIES

Adopted By Resolution No. C-120 -98, September 28, 1998

Revised #6.6 on 12/28/98; Revised #5.10 on 2/ 22/99, Resolution C-10-99

7. Maintaining recreation and open space corridors shall be coordinated with land use elements.
8. A park and recreation system shall be promoted which is integrated with existing and planned land use patterns.
9. School districts, local public agencies, State and Federal governments, recreation districts, the Federal government, and private entities should work together to develop joint inter-agency agreements to provide facilities that not only meet the demands of the education for youth, but also provide for public recreation opportunities that reduce the unnecessary duplication of facilities within Island County.
10. Review, comment and coordinate with Navy plans such as the NAS Whidbey Island Base Master Plan, Natural Resources Management Plan, Outdoor Recreation Management Plan, etc. as Appropriate, and continue to maintain active communication.

Note: This policy #8 was adopted as an amendment to the County-wide Planning Policies by the Board of Island County Commissioners and the Municipalities on July 27, 1998