LEED ND: Built Project | v3 - LEED 2009

Wetland and water body conservation

SLLp3 | Required

Glossary

Intent

To preserve water quality, natural hydrology, habitat, and biodiversity through conservation of wetlands and water bodies.

Requirements

Limit development effects on wetlands, water bodies, and surrounding buffer land according to the requirements below.

Option 1. Sites with no wetlands, water bodies, land within 50 feet (15 meters) of wetlands, or land within 100 feet (30 meters) of water bodies

Locate the project on a site that includes no wetlands, no water bodies, no land within 50 feet (15 meters) of wetlands, and no land within 100 feet (30 meters) of water bodies.

OR

Option 2. Sites with wetlands, water bodies, land within 50 feet (15 meters) of wetlands, or land within 100 feet (30 meters) of water bodies

a. Locate the project such that preproject wetlands, water bodies, land within 50 feet (15 meters) of wetlands, and land within 100 feet (30 meters) of water bodies is not affected by new development, unless the development is minor improvements or is on previously developed land.

OR

b. Earn at least 1 point under GIB Credit 8, Stormwater Management, and limit any impacts beyond minor improvements to less than the percentage of buffer land listed in Table 1.

Residential density (DU/acre)*	Residential density (DU/hectare)	Nonresidential density (FAR)*	Percentage of buffer land** where impacts beyond minor improvements are allowed
> 25	> 62	> 1.75	≤ 20%
> 18 and ≤ 25	> 45 and ≤ 62	> 1.25 to ≤ 1.75	≤ 15%
> 10 and ≤ 18	> 25 and ≤ 45	> .75 to ≤ 1.25	≤ 10%
≤ 10	> 25	≤ .75	≤ 5%

DU = dwelling unit; FAR = floor-area ratio.

* For this option, a mixed-use project may use either its residential or its nonresidential *density* to determine the percentage of allowable impacts, regardless of which is higher.

** For this option, buffer width may vary as long as the total buffer area is equal to the area within 50 feet (15 meters) of wetlands and/or within 100 feet (30 meters) of water bodies, minus excluded features (see below). The minimum buffer width, however, is 25 feet (8 meters) for wetlands and 50 feet (15 meters) for water bodies, measured from the edge. In the minimum buffer, only minor improvements and/or improvements that result in no ecological impairment of the wetland or water body, as determined by a qualified biologist, are allowed.

AND

For all projects

Comply with all local, state, and federal regulations pertaining to wetland and water body conservation.

The following features are not considered wetlands, water bodies, or buffer land that must be protected for the purposes of this prerequisite:

a. Previously developed land.
b. Man-made water bodies (such as industrial mining pits, concrete-lined canals, or stormwater retention ponds) that lack natural edges and floors or native ecological communities in the water and along the edge.
c. Man-made linear wetlands that result from the interruption of natural drainages by existing rights-of-way.
d. Wetlands that were man-made incidentally and have been rated “poor” for all measured wetland functions. Wetland quality assessment must be performed by a qualified biologist using a method that is accepted by state or regional permitting agencies.

Minor improvements within the buffer may be undertaken to enhance appreciation for the wetland or water body, provided such facilities are open to public access. Only the following improvements are permitted:

a. Bicycle and pedestrian pathways no more than 12 feet (3.5 meters) wide, of which no more than 8 feet (2.5 meters) may be impervious.
b. Activities to maintain or restore native natural communities and/or natural hydrology.
c. One single-story structure not exceeding 500 square feet (45 square meters) per 300 linear feet (90 meters) of buffer, on average.
d. Grade changes necessary to ensure public access.
e. Clearings, limited to one per 300 linear feet (90 meters) of buffer on average, not exceeding 500 square feet (45 square meters) each, for tables, benches, and access for nonmotorized recreational watercraft. Off-street parking is not considered a minor improvement.
f. Removal of hazardous trees; up to 75% of dead trees; trees less than 6 inches (150 millimeters) diameter at breast height; trees under 40% condition rating; and up to 20% of trees more than 6 inches (150 millimeters) diameter at breast height with a condition rating of 40% or higher. The condition rating must be based on an assessment by an arborist certified by the International

Society of Arboriculture (ISA) using ISA standard measures.

g. Brownfield remediation activities.

Direct impacts to wetlands and water bodies are prohibited, except for minimal-impact structures, such as an elevated boardwalk, that allow access to the water for educational and recreational purposes. Structures that protrude into wetlands or water bodies may be replaced, provided the replacement structure has the same or smaller footprint and a similar height.