

SEATTLE WILDLAND URBAN INTERFACE CODE

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Seattle Urban Forestry Commission

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Purpose: Regulate construction near wildlands to protect life and property from fires.

Code status: Pending; effective March 2024

Description

Wildland Urban Interface Code establishes requirements for land use and the built environment within Wildland Urban Interface areas.

- Regulates ignition-resistant construction techniques and defensible space requirements
- Focuses on preventing ignition of buildings and vegetation from exposure to wildfire and fire exposure from adjacent structures
- Helps prevent structure fires in the WUI from spreading to wildlands, even in the absence of fire department intervention

Definitions

Wildland: An area in which development is essentially nonexistent, except for roads, railroads, power lines and similar facilities.

Wildland Urban Interface/Intermix area: That geographical area where structures and other human development meets or intermingles with wildland or vegetative fuels.

Delineating the WUI

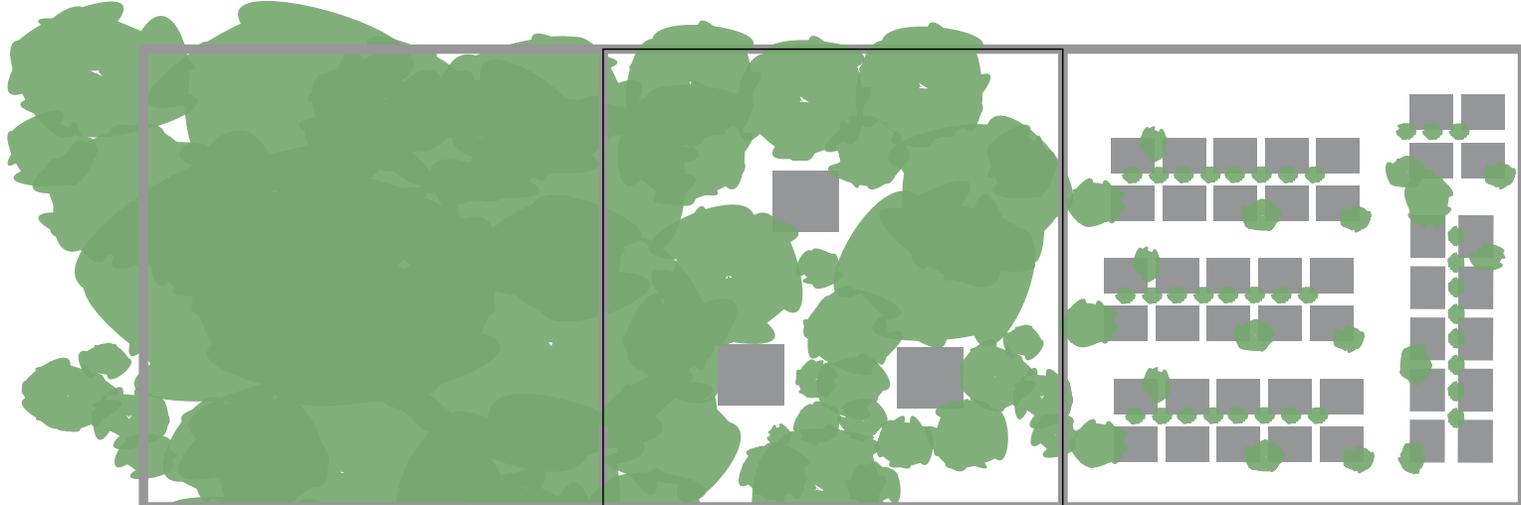
WUI determined by

- Structure density within the area
- Vegetated vs. non-vegetated ($\geq 50\%$ vs $< 50\%$)
- Proximity to high-density ($\geq 75\%$ vegetated area)
 - Near = less than 1.5 miles Distant = 1.5 miles or greater

WUI Code applies

- Structure density is Very Low to High and vegetation category is Vegetated (Intermix)
- Structure density is Very Low to High and proximity category is Near (Interface)

High-density
vegetation
Uninhabited

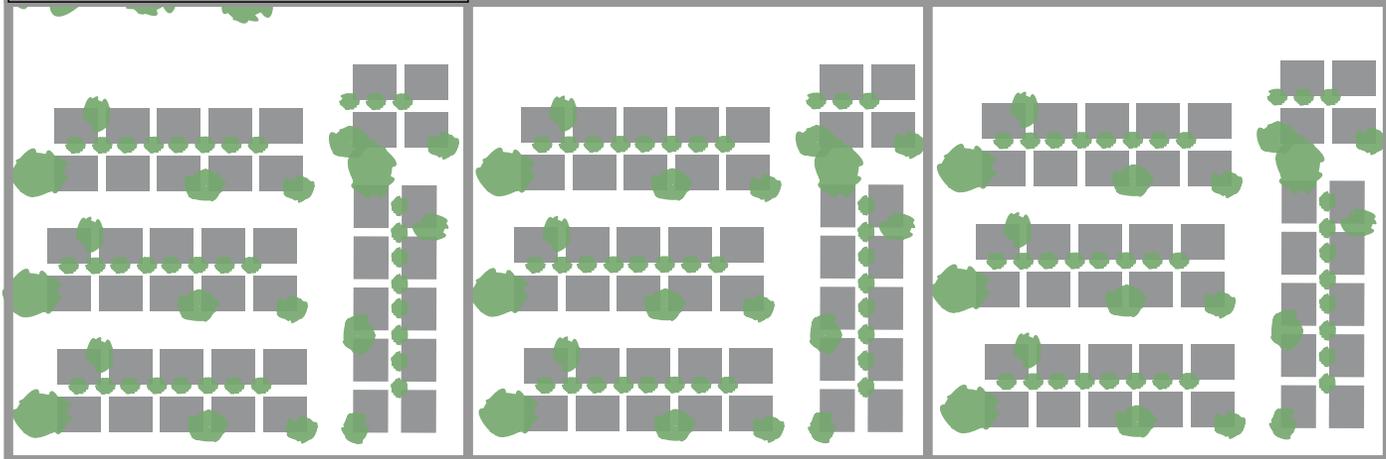


1 mile

High-density
vegetation;
Low structure
density

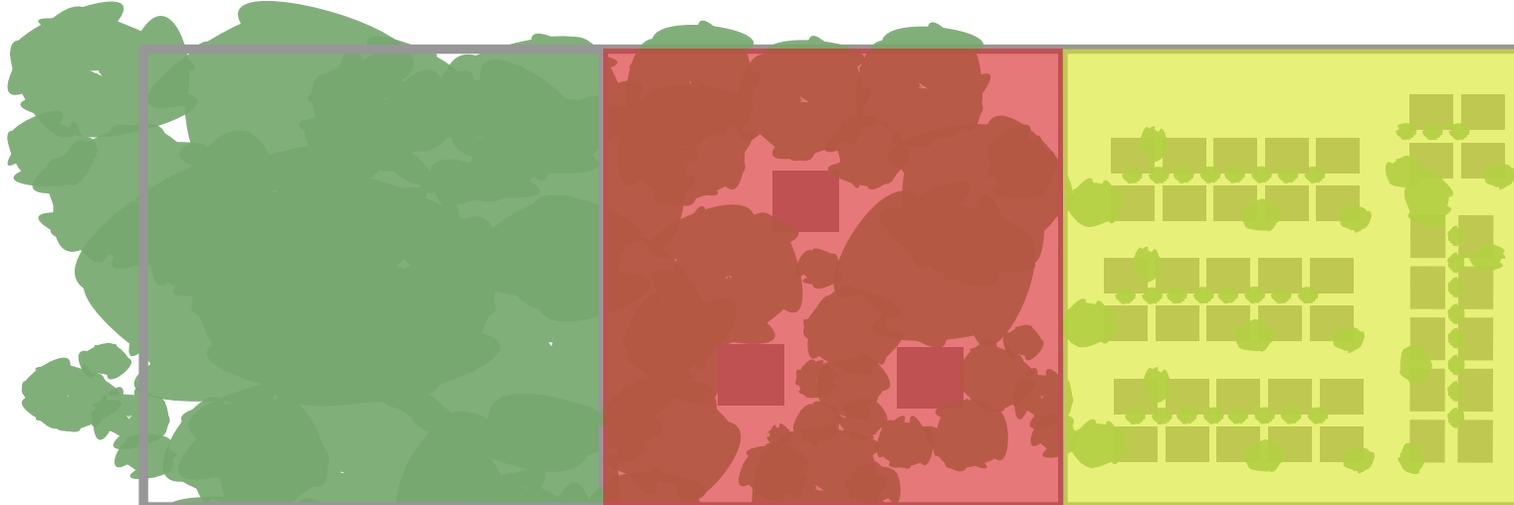


Unvegetated;
High structure
density; near
high-density
vegetation



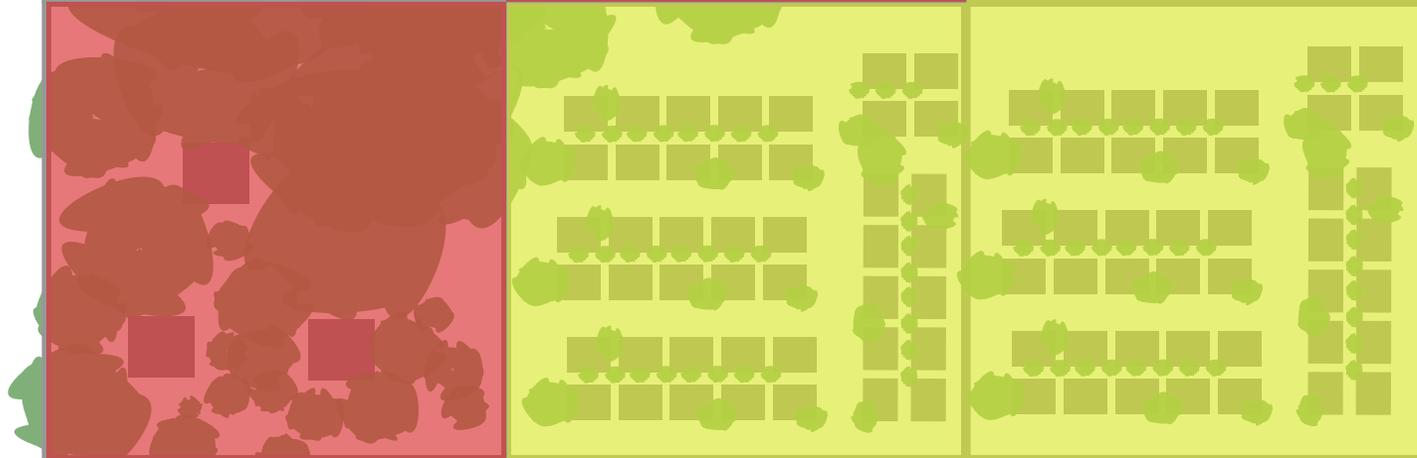
Unvegetated;
High structure
density; distant
from high-density
vegetation

Wildland

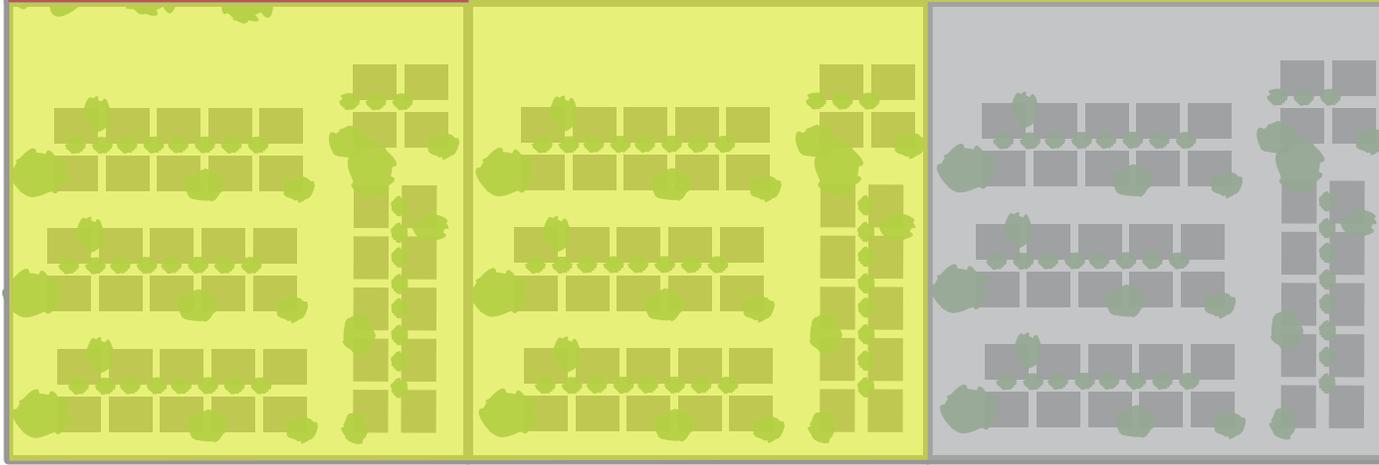


1 mile

Intermix



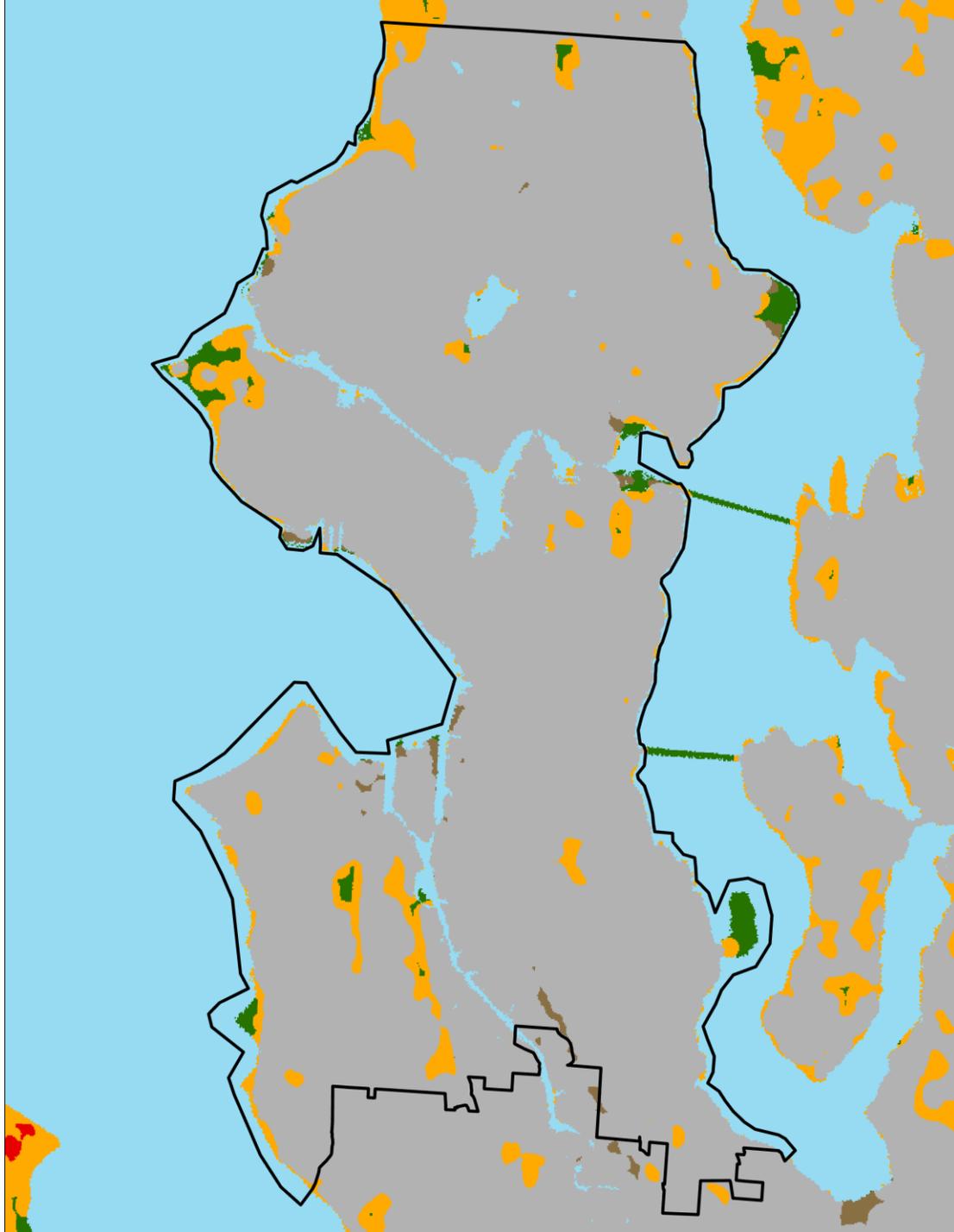
Interface



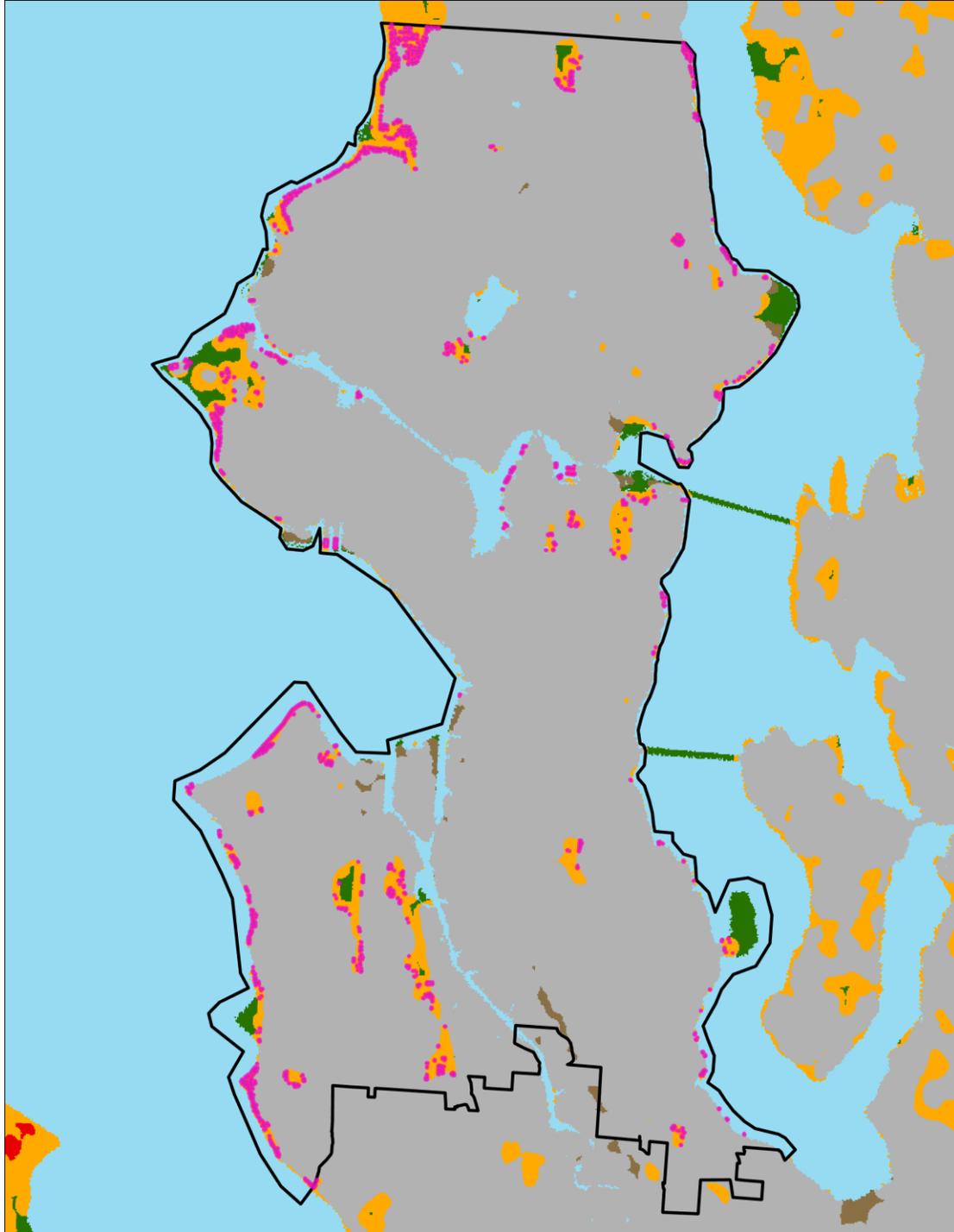
Urban



Seattle WUI Map



Seattle WUI Map



Defensible space

- 30 foot minimum all directions from structure, or to lot line.
 - Within this space, trees are allowed, provided there is a 10 foot horizontal distance between crowns of trees and between crowns of trees to structures.
- No trees/flammable vegetation within five feet of structure.
- When defensible space requirements result in tree or vegetation removal that is not permitted by other codes, such as ECA or the TPO, consult with SDCI staff to determine compliance path.



When WUI Code would apply

If your proposed construction is within a mapped WUI interface or intermix area, or within a mapped wildland area that is determined to be WUI interface or intermix, your project needs to comply with this code. If the mapped area covers only part of your site, these requirements apply to the structures or portion of structures that are within the mapped area

Will not affect sites in WUI not undergoing construction