



SAN JUAN COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

135 Rhone Street, PO Box 947, Friday Harbor, WA 98250
(360) 378-2354 | (360) 378-2116
dcd@sanjuanco.com | www.sanjuanco.com

POLICIES/PROCEDURES/INTERPRETATIONS

Erika Shook, AICP 
Director of Community Development

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LUP-2020-03_Impervious Surface Coverage Maximums in Rural General Use

ISSUE:

Development in the Rural General Use land use designation is limited to 10% impervious cover, except as modified by notes by Table 6.2 of the San Juan County Code (SJCC 18.60.050). Notes 10, 15, and 16 modify this requirement.

Since 2008, with the adoption of more stringent stormwater regulations, Community Development staff have consistently interpreted Note 10, specifically its reference to the stormwater requirements of SJCC 18.60.070, to allow development to exceed the impervious surface limits when permanent stormwater management control measures are proposed sufficient to handle stormwater on-site consistent with the requirements of SJCC 18.60.070.

BACKGROUND:

Table 6.2 of San Juan County Code (SJCC 18.60.050) contains the density, dimension and open space standards for the Rural General Use (RGU) Land use designation. Table 6.2 requires a maximum of 10% impervious surfaces in the RGU land use designation. Notes 10, 15 and 16 modify the maximum impervious surface requirement in RGU.

These standards were originally adopted in 1998 by Ordinance 2-1998, except that notes 15 and 16 were added by 2000 Ordinance 11-2000. Ordinance 2-1998 also adopted stormwater management requirements referenced in SJCC 18.60.070.

Note 15 exempts parcels under five acres in size from compliance with the impervious surface requirements provided that development provides stormwater management in compliance with SJCC 18.60.070.

In 2008, the stormwater requirements were amended to adopt the Washington State Department of Ecology Stormwater Manual for Western Washington, publications 05-10-029 through 05-10-033. Ordinance 52-2008 adopted the most recent version of the County stormwater regulations found in SJCC 18.60.070 and in its findings stated:

“R. The section of the development standards covering storm drainage standards is amended by this ordinance to refer to the current addition of the State stormwater management manual and to make it clear that the Best Management Practices identified in the 2005 Low Impact Development Technical Guidance Manual for Puget Sound are acceptable alternatives for managing stormwater runoff. Use of these standards will protect the quality and quantity of groundwater.”

This ordinance added this intent to SJCC 18.60.070 but did not make changes to Table 6.2 or its notes to make the regulations consistent.

POLICY:

The impervious surface maximums for Rural General Use found in Table 6.2 of the San Juan County Code (SJCC 18.60.050) apply only if stormwater on the site is not addressed by permanent stormwater controls implemented consistent with the 2005 Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington or best management practices identified in the 2005 Low Impact Development Technical Manual for Puget Sound.