

# HOAs, CREEKS AND WETLANDS FAQ



## What land must the HOA maintain?

Land tracts owned by an HOA are shown on the subdivision plat map filed with the County, which also describes the HOA's maintenance responsibilities. The HOA's governance documents should include the plat map. To get a copy of a plat map, contact the Washington County Surveyor's office at 503.846.8723.

## Do HOAs maintain wetlands and creeks?

Yes, many HOAs own creeks and wetlands that they must maintain as described in the recorded plat. It's important to maintain wetlands and creeks with healthy native plants to remove pollution from runoff and protect our community's water quality. A list of landscaping contractors experienced in this type of work is included.

## How are invasive weeds like blackberry and ivy controlled?

The most effective control is ongoing removal of Himalayan blackberry, English ivy and other invasive plant species, and replanting with native plants. Learn more on [cleanwaterservices.org](http://cleanwaterservices.org).



## Is it okay to remove trees?

With approval from Clean Water Services, the HOA may remove trees from tracts near wetlands and streams. For information, please contact our permit counter at 503.681.5100.

## Is there assistance for HOAs?

In some cases, Clean Water Services staff or our partners at Friends of Trees can provide technical assistance and native plants to help HOAs maintain healthy creeks and wetlands. Check out [cleanwaterservices.org/HOA](http://cleanwaterservices.org/HOA) to learn about:

- Borrowing our trailer of tools for an enhancement project in your neighborhood, like invasive removal and native planting
- When and where to pick up free plants.
- How to apply for up to three hours of on-site technical assistance to help you create a sustainable stormwater landscape.



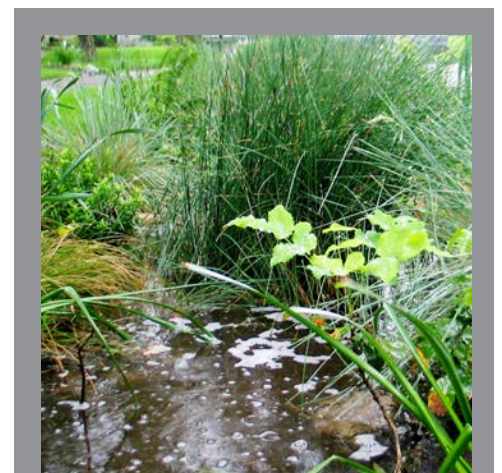
## Who maintains water quality facilities?

Some water quality facilities are public and some are private. If you are not sure whether a water quality facility is public or private, call our main line, 503.681.3600. There are some private facilities that may be the responsibility of land owners to maintain. Learn more about the Private Water Quality Facility Management

Program at [cleanwaterservices.org](http://cleanwaterservices.org). Facilities that are considered "public" are maintained by Clean Water Services or member cities. If there is overgrown vegetation in a water quality facility, Clean Water Services may remove some of the vegetation. Please call Field Operations to report this issue at 503.547.8100.

## What does an easement mean?

The easement restricts development but allows the property owner (often the HOA) to maintain and enhance the area. Clean Water Services may have an easement over wetlands, streams, and adjacent vegetated corridors for storm and surface water drainage and to preserve water quality. The easement restricts development but allows the property owner (often the HOA) to maintain and enhance the area.



Many homeowner associations (HOAs) own tracts of land that have creeks or wetlands that must be maintained. These frequently asked questions will help your HOA understand appropriate landscape maintenance to properly care for these important areas.

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## PLANNING FOR RESTORATION

### Year 1-2 – Site Prep

- Mow grass, vegetation
- Spot spray weeds (ivy, garlic mustard, thistle)
- Cut & treat blackberry, scotch broom
- Cut and treat tree weeds

May – July  
July – October  
July – November  
October – December

### Year 2-4 – Planting

- Broadcast seed
- Plant plugs
- Plant container plants
- Plant bare root, woody plants

October – December  
October – December  
October – April  
January – February

### Year 2 & beyond – Maintenance

- Mow grass, vegetation as necessary
- Spot spray weeds, ring spray plants
- Interplant woody plants as necessary

April – September  
April – September  
October – April

### Year 2 & beyond – Monitoring

- Annual monitoring
- Interplant woody plants as necessary

June – August  
October – April

## GLOSSARY

### Easement

Grants one person or entity the right to use land that belongs to another, in a specific area for a specific use.

### Plat

Surveyed map of individual properties, streets, easements, and public recreation areas; generally, publicly-recorded.

### Tract

One or more contiguous lots or parcels in the same ownership.

## Resources

- To report overgrown vegetation in a water quality facility, contact CWS Field Operations: **503.547.8100**
- To request permission to remove trees, contact the CWS Permit Counter: **503.681.5100**
- To discuss questions about HOA's, creeks and wetlands with CWS, contact us at [AskWatershed@CleanWaterServices.org](mailto:AskWatershed@CleanWaterServices.org) or 503.681.3680
- To connect with Friends of Trees' HOA program, contact them at [FOT@friendsoftrees.org](mailto:FOT@friendsoftrees.org) or 503.282.8846
- Find plat information regarding tracts, open space, easements and related topics on iSpirits: [bit.ly/2dnTuSw](http://bit.ly/2dnTuSw)
- To find a Landscape Professional visit: [backyardhabitats.org/resources/professionals-directory/](http://backyardhabitats.org/resources/professionals-directory/)
- To obtain a plat map, contact the Washington County Surveyor **503.846.8723**

Everything we do at Clean Water Services aims to protect public health while enhancing the natural environment of the Tualatin River Watershed. Combining science and nature, we work in partnership with others to safeguard the river's health and vitality, ensure the economic success of our region, and protect public health for nearly 600,000 residents and businesses in urban Washington County.



Revised 03/2021