Chapter 9 - Natural Environment

Purpose
The purpose of the Natural Environment Chapter is to:

• Provide a series of goals and policies to identify, protect, and enhance the natural environment in and around the City of Spokane.
• Recognize the connection between a thriving natural environment and the quality of life of its residents and visitors.
• Highlight the link between the natural world and the City’s economy.

What values guided the Natural Environment chapter?
The values that are important to Spokane’s future, as identified by the Citizens during preparation of the original Comprehensive Plan remain. Those include:

• Protecting and replanting street trees, trees in parks, and private trees.
• Guaranteeing good clean air and water.
• Preserving the natural environment outside the city.
• Maintaining a close connection to the outdoors, recreation, and nature areas.
• Using alternatives to personal automobiles to save energy and protect the environment.
• Recognizing the uniqueness of the four seasons and the climate.
• Recycling.
• Being responsible stewards of the environment.
• Keeping areas where wildlife live.
• Maintaining the availability of open space, golf courses, and trails.
• Maintaining tree-lined streets and the natural beauty.
• Preserving the Spokane River and Latah Creek.

What’s New?
• This chapter was reviewed by staff and minor changes were made to streamline the chapter and remove redundancies.
• Eight policies that repeated policies in other chapters were removed.

What are the goals of the Natural Environment chapter?

NE 1 Water Quality
Protect the Spokane Valley - Rathdrum Prairie Aquifer and other water sources so they provide clean, pure water.

NE 2 Sustainable Water Quantity
Ensure all aquifers and water sources are not diminished below sustainable recharge or flow levels.

NE 3 Shorelines
Protect the natural state of shorelines while providing community access that does not negatively impact riparian habitats, fragile soils, and native vegetation.

NE 4 Surface Water
Provide for clean rivers that support native fish and aquatic life and that are healthy for human recreation.

NE 5 Clean Air
Work consistently for cleaner air that nurtures the health of current residents, children and future generations.

NE 6 Native Species Protection
Protect and enhance diverse and healthy native species, such as plants, trees, animals, and fungi, for present and future generations and respect the ecological necessity of biodiversity.

NE 7 Natural Land Form
Preserve natural land forms that identify and typify our region.

NE 8 Agricultural Lands
Preserve land and provide opportunities for farming that generates produce for local markets and supports the farming economy.

NE 9 Sustainable Economy
Enhance the natural environment to support a thriving sustainable economy.

NE 10 Natural Environment and Employment
Create employment that enhances the natural environment.

NE 11 Natural Areas
Designate a network of natural areas (natural areas and connecting corridors) throughout Spokane that supports native habitats and natural land forms.

NE 12 Urban Forest
Maintain and enhance the urban forest to provide good air quality, reduce urban warming, and increase habitat.

NE 13 Connectivity
Create a citywide network of paved trails, designated sidewalks, and soft pathways that link regional trails, natural areas, parks, sacred and historical sites, schools, and urban centers.

NE 14 Plaza Design with Natural Elements
Develop or revitalize plazas using local nature elements, including water, vegetation, wildlife, and land forms.

NE 15 Natural Aesthetics
Retain and enhance nature views, natural aesthetics, sacred areas, and historic sites that define the Spokane region.

NE 16 Quality Of Life
Compile social, natural environment, and economic indicators of a healthy Spokane community on an annual basis, and compare them to prior years in order to assess Spokane’s progress.

NE 17 Natural Environment Education
Educate children and the community on how to improve Spokane’s natural environment.

NE 18 Energy Conservation
Promote the conservation of energy in the location and design of residential, service, and workplaces.

NE 19 Flood Hazards Management
Protect life and property from flooding and erosion by directing development away from flood hazard areas.