

# Working with Resource Conservation Areas

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See also: [The Roadside Policy Manual](#)

Effective August 2015

**Start procedure:** Region Design Office identifies Resource Conservation Area in the project area.

**End procedure:** Avoidance or Mitigation of impacts to Resource Conservation Area approved by WSDOT Roadside and Site Development Manager and FHWA.

Actor:	Action:
<b>Region Design Office</b>	1. <b>Identifies</b> that a Resource Conservation Area exists within the project limits. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Review data layer on the GIS Workbench to determine whether parcels designated as Resource Conservation Areas are located within the project limits.</li> <li>• Confirm parcel information from Real Estate Services.</li> </ul>
	2. <b>Determines</b> extent of impact to each parcel. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If plans preserve existing vegetation and landform(s) and avoid impacts, document effort in project file. <b>STOP here. No further coordination or approval required.</b></li> <li>• If impacts cannot be avoided, go to step 3.</li> </ul>
	3. <b>Scopes</b> plan to address impacts for each parcel. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If impacts cannot be avoided, minimize and mitigate impacts. Consult with Region Landscape Architect or HQ Roadside and Site Development Manager to right-size effort and outline options by following the policy in the <a href="#">Roadside Policy Manual</a>, Chapter 2.</li> <li>• If there are unavoidable impacts to Resource Conservation Areas along an Interstate or a National Scenic Byway, consultation with FHWA will be required.</li> </ul>
	4. <b>Identifies</b> mitigation options. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use criteria provided in the <a href="#">Roadside Policy Manual</a> to identify potential replacement sites.</li> <li>• Coordinate with Region Landscape Architect or HQ Roadside and Site Development Manager to develop mitigation approach (combination of parcel size, location, and vegetation that provides function) proposed for each potential site.</li> </ul>
	5. <b>Submits</b> mitigation proposal to HQ Roadside and Site Development Manager for FHWA concurrence with preferred option.

Actor:	Action:
<b>Region Landscape Architect or HQ Roadside Site Development Manager for regions without a Landscape Architect</b>	6. <b>Identifies</b> intended functions of the impacted parcel (why it was acquired). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Buffer between the highway and the adjacent land use, or integrate the highway into the surrounding native landscape.</li> <li>• Determine critical elements impacting intended functions (vegetation, landform(s), etc.).</li> </ul>
	7. <b>Provides</b> mitigation criteria to Region Design Office. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify functions and elements needed for mitigation.</li> <li>• Work with Region Design Office and HQ Roadside and Site Development Manager to balance requirements for parcel size and elements to achieve intended functions on replacement parcel.</li> </ul>
	8. <b>Endorses</b> proposal or works with Region Design Office to revise plan to develop best practical design option. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• If parcel is a Resource Conservation Area on an Interstate or National Scenic Byway, work with the FHWA Area Engineer and FHWA Environmental staff to revise plan.</li> <li>• Return comments to Region Design Office.</li> </ul>
<b>HQ Roadside and Site Development Manager</b>	9. <b>Consults</b> with FHWA for impacts to a Resource Conservation Area on an Interstate or a National Scenic Byway. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notify FHWA that project will impact a Resource Conservation Area.</li> <li>• Consult with FHWA Environmental staff on options and the preferred replacement proposal. Include Region Landscape Architect.</li> <li>• Approve plan to minimize or mitigate impacts to Resource Conservation Area.</li> <li>• Request approval from FHWA for agreed-upon mitigation.</li> </ul>
	10. <b>Obtains</b> written approval from FHWA.
	11. <b>Maintains</b> centralized documentation file for all actions on Resource Conservation Areas.
	12. <b>Acts</b> as data steward for Resource Conservation Area GIS layer. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with GIS experts to add parcel to GIS layer and provide metadata.</li> <li>• Ensure the layer is updated for all new parcels and impacts to existing parcels.</li> </ul>
<b>Region Design Office</b>	13. <b>Implements approved replacement proposal.</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purchase replacement parcel.</li> <li>• Update Real Estate maps, database, and right of way plans.</li> <li>• Provide data on new parcel for GIS layer for Resource Conservation Areas.</li> <li>• Include site work in contract (fencing, weed control, site preparation, planting, plant establishment, etc.).</li> <li>• Develop and implement long-term maintenance agreements, if applicable.</li> </ul>