

## Current Environmental Conditions

The City of Mountlake Terrace occupies the highest elevation in southwest Snohomish County. A broad hill rises from a low point of 263 feet at the extreme southeast corner of the city to 528 feet at the site of the City's water towers. The hillsides are broad terraces and slope to the north, east, west, and south. The Halls Creek depression and Lake Ballinger form the western boundary. Toward the City of Brier, the ravine and steep slope of Lyons Creek East constitutes the eastern boundary. To the northeast, the Swamp Creek area, also known as Scriber Creek, and 212th Street are the major delineating features of the City. 244th Street Southwest serves as the City and Snohomish County's southern boundary. Because the City is now substantially developed, much of the original natural environment has been altered, and certain features, such as large blocks of wildlife habitat, have been lost.

In 2002, the City inventoried sites that have either previously contained underground petroleum tanks or that currently contain underground petroleum tanks. (See Figure EN-3.) When underground tanks are no longer used, they should be removed and the site cleaned up. The removal of underground tanks requires a special process to prevent environmental damage.

Environmental quality within the City of Mountlake Terrace is similar to elsewhere in the Puget Sound region. Also, although the City has no marine shoreline, the recent listing of the Puget Sound chinook salmon as a "Threatened" species under ESA, means the City must address the issue of how its streams, wetlands, and drainage systems function as part of the larger, interconnected freshwater/marine system. As in many other communities, the concern regarding environmental quality has moved beyond preservation of natural functions to restoration – how can we restore and manage important natural functions that have been lost while still acknowledging our urban setting? The City also recognizes that the quality of the natural environment is an important factor in determining the overall quality of life for Mountlake Terrace residents and businesses.

Together with the federal and state governments, local government is a trustee of its natural environment. As such, the City develops plans, adopts and enforces specific environmental regulations, and educates residents with respect to protecting and restoring sensitive environmental processes. Examples of the City's actions include:

- Participation in state-mandated Watershed Planning (Mountlake Terrace lies within WRIA 8/Cedar-Sammamish Water Resource Inventory Area);
- Updating of the City's Shoreline Master Program;
- Updating state-mandated Critical Area Regulations;
- Updating storm drainage regulations for consistency with the State Department of Ecology Storm Drainage Manual;
- Updating road maintenance practices; and
- Compliance with NPDES II Requirements.

Environmental conditions and environmentally critical areas within the City are summarized below: