

POLICY FOR NATURAL RESOURCE MANAGEMENT AREAS

I. POLICY STATEMENT

Auburn University's (the University's) "Policy for Natural Resource Management Areas" implements the [Campus Master Plan Land Use Element](#) as it relates to University Land designated as Natural Resource Management Areas with limited development potential, including the protection, enhancement, and restoration of Parkerson Mill Creek, Town Creek, and the tributaries within their watersheds on the main campus.

The Policy provides guidance on management of Natural Resource Management Areas, recognizing that the Master Plan is subject to revision, and implementation of the policy is subject to the availability of funding.

II. POLICY PRINCIPLES

- A. The University campus includes Natural Resource Management Areas designated for preservation, rather than development.
 1. These valuable natural resources are an integral part of the campus environment.
 2. The University shall be a leader in the state and region regarding the wise stewardship of these important resources.
- B. The University recognizes its Natural Resource Management Areas as vital outdoor classrooms for student observation and learning in biological sciences, agriculture, forestry and wildlife management, water resources, environmental sciences, ecological engineering, landscape architecture, sustainability, geology, and other curricula.
- C. The University establishes its watershed management and water quality standards to ensure compliance with Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regulatory requirements through its Storm Water Management Plan.
- D. With regard to its stewardship of its Natural Resource Management Areas, Streams, and Wetlands, the University shall to the maximum extent practicable and affordable:
 1. Restore, improve, and protect water quality by:
 - a. Conducting Stream and Wetland Determinations as part of project and construction processes to identify all existing Intermittent Streams, Perennial Streams, and Wetlands;
 - b. Maintaining Open Channel conditions;
 - c. Removing Invasive Vegetation and establishing Native Vegetation;
 - d. Maintaining Stream & Wetland Buffers per Table 1 on each side of all Perennial Streams, Intermittent Streams, and Wetlands;

Table 1: Stream and Wetland Buffer Width Based on Drainage Area

Drain Area (Watershed) Designation	Buffer Streamside Zone	Buffer Managed Use Zone	Buffer UQland Zone	Total Buffer Width on Each Side of the Stream or Wetland
<100 acres	25 feet	None	10 feet	35 feet
> or = 100 acres	25 feet	None	20 feet	45 feet
> or = 300 acres	25 feet	20 feet	10 feet	55 feet
> or = 640 acres	25 feet	50 feet	25 feet	100 feet

- e. Identifying Stream Segments for Stream Enhancement projects to improve Stream Function, Stream Stability, and/or aesthetics, as practicable and affordable;
2. Achieve Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) limit as established by ADEM to meet water quality standards and enable ongoing water quality improvement;
 3. Enhance Stream Function and Stream Stability to improve overall stream health, recreational opportunities, and aesthetics;
 4. Incorporate these stewardship initiatives into all campus planning, development, and operations.

III. EFFECTIVE DATE

APPROVED: May 5, 2016;
 ADOPTED: May 12, 2016

IV. APPLICABILITY

This policy applies to all University Land designated as a Natural Resource Management Area in the Campus Master Plan as well as all Intermittent Streams, Perennial Streams, and Wetlands outside of the Natural Resource Management Areas.

V. POLICY MANAGEMENT

Responsible Office: Auburn University Facilities Management
Responsible Executive: Executive Vice President, Auburn University
Responsible Officer: Associate Vice President, Facilities Management

VI. DEFINITIONS

ADEM: Alabama Department of Environmental Management, the governing body responsible for enforcing environmental regulations in the State of Alabama.

Campus Master Plan: As stipulated in the University's "Campus and Capital Projects Planning Policy," the Campus Master Plan "is a physical plan and comprehensive set of policy directives that together provide long-range strategies for the growth and development

of the Auburn University campus." The Campus Master Plan is updated periodically, as required, and the Board of Trustees reviews and approves all changes.

Campus Master Plan Land Use Area: General zone or part of the campus to which a Land Use Category is assigned as part of the Campus Master Plan Land Use Element.

Campus Master Plan Land Use Category: Classification providing guidance on the type of activity that is allowed in a specific Land Use Area as part of the Campus Master Plan Land Use Element.

Campus Master Plan Land Use Element: The chapter of the Campus Master Plan that establishes formal Land Use Categories and Land Use Area boundaries that define permitted uses for all University Land.

Clean Water Act (CWA): Act passed by the United States Congress to control water pollution, formally called the Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972 or Federal Water Pollution Control Act Amendments of 1972.

Drain Area (Watershed) Designation: Acreage of total upstream land area that drains to a specific Stream or Wetland.

Invasive Vegetation: Non-native plants that have a tendency to spread, causing damage to the environment and/or human health. Invasive Vegetation disrupts the native ecosystem and forces out native plant species, which results in habitat loss and water table modification. Also known as introduced or exotic vegetation.

Master Plan Committee: A representative committee appointed by the President that provides input regarding facilities, planning, transportation planning, land planning, infrastructure, and site development activities. The Committee also provides input on the continuing administration, maintenance, implementation, change, and updating of the Campus Master Plan.

Native Vegetation: A plant whose presence and survival in a specific region is not due to human intervention. Also known as indigenous vegetation.

Natural Resource Management Area (NR): The Campus Master Plan Land Use Category and Land Use Area, identified on the Campus Master Plan as "NR," that identifies areas of the campus that are designated for natural resource protection and enhancement with limited development potential. NR areas include land located on either side of Parkerson Mill Creek and Town Creek and their tributaries, FEMA 100-year floodplains, wetlands, streams, steep slopes, and critical buffer zones.

NPDES: National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System. The national program for issuing, modifying, revoking, reissuing, terminating, monitoring, and enforcing permits and for imposing and enforcing pretreatment requirements under sections 307, 318, 402, and 405 of the Clean Water Act (CWA).

Open Channel: A length of water with flow that comes from a free water source and is neither completely enclosed by the boundaries of a pipe nor under any external pressure but gravity.

Parkerson Mill Creek: One of two principal stream systems, including all tributaries and main channel streams, that flows on the University main campus (see appendix 1); a tributary of Chewacla Creek, which flows into the Tallapoosa River.

Parkerson Mill Creek Watershed: Area of land on the University main campus that drains the tributaries, main channel, stream banks, and floodplain of Parkerson Mill Creek (see appendix 1).

Permitted Use: Activity such as construction or operational practice allowed in a given area.

Stormwater Management Plan (SWMP): University plan developed for the implementation of NPDES permit requirements.

Stream: A body of concentrated flowing water in a natural low area or natural channel on the land surface categorized as ephemeral, intermittent, or perennial (see definitions below).

Stream, Ephemeral: A stream that only carries stormwater in direct response to precipitation. An ephemeral stream may have a well-defined channel and typically lacks the biological, hydrological, and physical characteristics commonly associated with intermittent or continuous conveyances of water. The Stormwater Management Plan, ADEM, EPA, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers typically do not regulate ephemeral streams.

Stream, Intermittent: A stream that has a well-defined channel that contains water for only part of the year (typically during winter and spring). The flow may be heavily supplemented by stormwater. When dry, intermittent streams typically lack the biological and hydrological characteristics commonly associated with continuous conveyances of water. The Stormwater Management Plan, ADEM, EPA, and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers typically regulate Intermittent Streams.

Stream, Perennial: A stream that has a well-defined channel that contains water year round during years with normal rainfall. Groundwater is the primary source of water, but perennial streams also carry stormwater. They exhibit the typical biological, hydrological, and physical characteristics commonly associated with the continuous conveyance of water. The Stormwater Management Plan, ADEM, EPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers typically regulate Perennial Streams.

Stream Enhancement: Process to assist recovery of functions in a stream that has been degraded, damaged, or destroyed.

Stream Function: Activity or purpose of a designated waterway. Examples include habitat for fish and aquatic invertebrates; and/or the transport of water, sediment, and nutrients.

Stream Segment: The part of a stream extending between designated tributary junctions. Also known as channel segment.

Stream Stability: Capability of a stream to balance flows and sediment loads. A naturally stable stream channel maintains its dimension, pattern, and profile such that the stream neither degrades (erodes) nor aggrades (rises). Naturally stable streams can transport the sediment load supplied by its watershed.

Stream and Wetland Buffer: University Land on each side of all Perennial Streams, Intermittent Streams, and Wetlands with development restrictions as required by this Policy. The Stream and Wetland buffer is comprised of three zones: Streamside Zone, Managed Use Zone, and Upland Zone. Buffer widths for streams are measured horizontally on a line perpendicular to the surface water landward from the top of the bank on each side of the stream. The top of the bank is the landward edge of the stream channel during high water or bank-full conditions at the point where the water leaves the stream channel and begins to overflow onto the floodplain.

Stream and Wetland Buffer, Streamside Zone: Functions to protect the physical and ecological integrity of the Stream/Wetland ecosystem; native vegetation is preferred in this zone and should promote physical and ecological integrity of the stream/wetland ecosystem; Invasive Vegetation and underbrush should be removed and the zone maintained. Permitted Uses in this area are restricted and limited to: flood control structures, utility easements, natural footpaths, and crossings and approaches for paved roadways.

Stream and Wetland Buffer, Managed Use Zone: Functions to protect key components of the Stream/Wetland and provide distance between upland development and the streamside zone; should consist of mature vegetation and native trees; Invasive Vegetation and underbrush should be removed and the zone maintained; Permitted Uses in this area are restricted to: all uses allowed in the Buffer Streamside Zone as well as storm water best management practices (BMPs), biking and hiking paths (with natural or pervious surfaces preferred), outdoor teaching facilities, and limited tree clearing. Site grading, accessory structures, principle structures, or hardscape elements with substantial footings in this zone are not permitted

Stream and Wetland Buffer, Upland Zone: Functions to prevent encroachment and filter runoff from residential developed areas; can include lawn areas, gardens, more exotic shrubs, and landscaping features; Invasive Vegetation and underbrush should be removed and the zone maintained; Permitted Uses limited to: all uses allowed in the Buffer Streamside and Buffer Managed Use Zones, as well as, minimal grading for recreation fields, gardens, and minimal hardscape elements or accessory structures needed to support recreation, teaching, or research functions. Principal structures or hardscape elements with substantial footings in this zone should be avoided.

Stream and Wetland Determination: The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers determine the presence and location of Intermittent and Perennial Streams and Wetlands under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act. Typically on University Lands, Perennial and Intermittent Streams are identified through site inspection by a qualified professional and determined to satisfy the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers definition for said Streams/Wetlands. Facilities Management submits a wetland determination to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers for approval.

TMDL: Total Maximum Daily Load designates the calculated maximum amount of pollutant that a body of water can receive and still safely meet water quality standards.

$TMDL = \text{Wasteload Allocation (NPS)} + \text{Load Allocation (PS)} + \text{Margin of Safety}.$

Town Creek: One of two principal stream systems, including all tributaries and main channel streams that flow on the University main campus (see appendix 1); a tributary of Chewacla Creek, which flows into the Tallapoosa River.

Town Creek Watershed: Area of land on the University main campus that drains the tributaries, main channel, stream banks, and floodplain of Town Creek (see appendix 1).

University Land: All land owned or leased by Auburn University.

Wetland: The interfaces between land and water. They are characterized by having hydric soils, hydrophytic plants and wetland hydrology. The Auburn University Storm Water Management Plan, ADEM and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers regulate wetlands.

VII. POLICY PROCEDURES

- A. Auburn University Facilities Management ("Facilities Management") will administer this policy on behalf of the University.
- 8. Facilities Management shall establish a Natural Resource Management Area Committee (NRMAC) as a subcommittee of the Master Plan Committee. The NRMAC shall:
 - 1. Develop, review, and update Management Plans for the Parkerson Mill Creek and Town Creek Watersheds on a regular basis, ensuring that they comply with the University Storm Water Management Plan;
 - 2. Write and submit grant applications for additional funding for conservation and restoration projects;
 - 3. Develop a checklist to ensure compliance with this policy and the management plans described herein;
 - 4. Provide recommendations to the Responsible Officer regarding the impact of actions, practices, and/or projects as required on the safety and health of the Natural Resource Management Area.
- C. The NRMAC will include members from the Master Plan Committee as well as additional ad hoc representatives from the Alabama Cooperative Extension System; College of Agriculture; College of Sciences and Mathematics; Landscape Services; the Office of Risk Management and Safety; the Office of Sustainability; the School of Forestry and Wildlife Sciences; the Athletics Department; and Office of the Vice President of Student Affairs.
- D. The Responsible Officer will consider the NRMAC's recommendations to determine whether an action, practice, and/or project can go forward to the Executive Vice President or the Provost.
- E. Requests for variances shall be submitted to the Responsible Officer. As a general rule, projects, plans, or operations that negatively impact the Natural Resource Management Area will not be approved unless modifications are made to eliminate, minimize, or mitigate the negative impact.

VIII. SANCTIONS

Failure to comply with the requirements of this policy may result in the cancellation of the proposed action or revocation of funding.

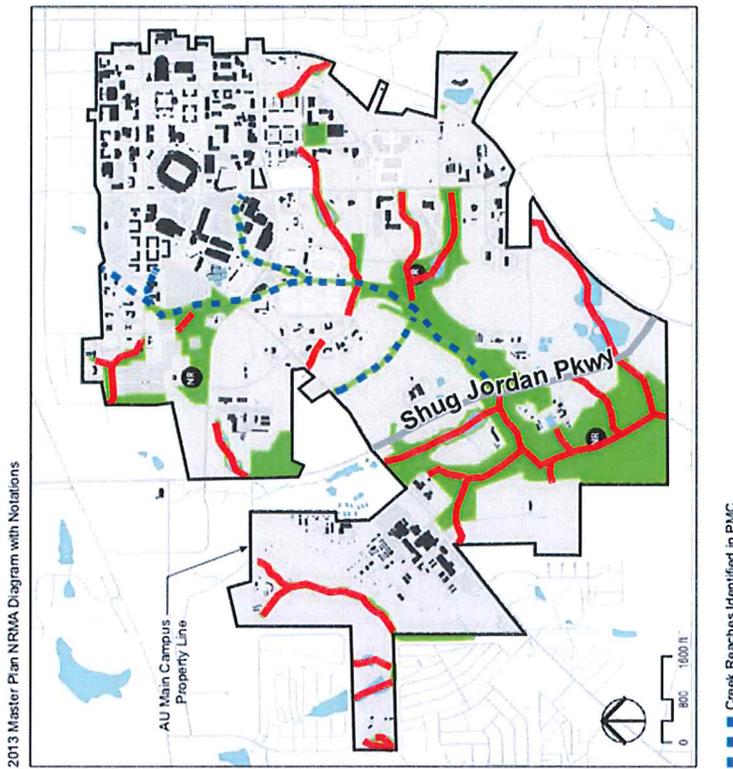
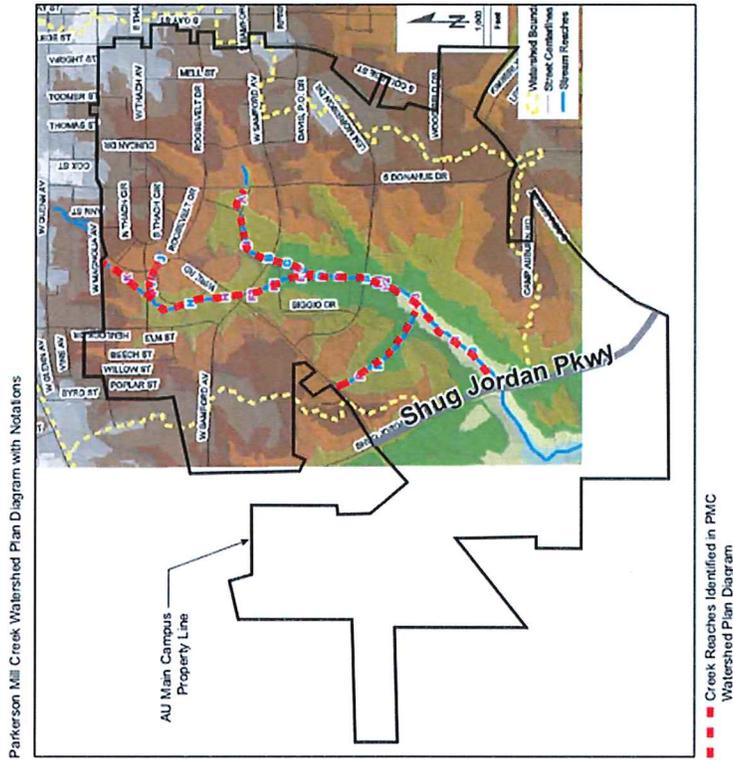
IX. EXCEPTIONS

This policy applies only to the University main campus.

X. INTERPRETATION

Interpretation of this policy resides with the AVP, Facilities Management.

APPENDIX 1



2013 Master Plan Diagram vs PMC Watershed Plan Diagram
 Natural Resource Management Area & Stream Reaches
 AU - OUA
 February 5, 2015