5. FOREST MANAGEMENT ZONE

The discussion of intent for the agricultural zone applies equally to the forest management zone.

6. NON-RESIDENTIAL FLOATING ZONE

One of Island County's principal objectives is to preserve its rural character. Non-residential development poses a particular concern because if not carried out in a careful manner, it can erode the agricultural, forest and rural residential uses which are predominant. The appropriateness of a non-residential use can often not be assessed fully except on a site by site basis. Therefore, the County will use a floating zone to establish future non-residential uses.

The floating zone is not expected to be utilized extensively - more often for industrial uses and for commercial development of a non-retail nature. Most retail uses are expected to be accomodated in Urban Business Centers or Zones of Influence. Projects will typically undergo a two step review -- first use approval and then site plan review. Use approval will constitute an official control and therefore requires Planning Commission/Board action. A site plan will be treated like a subdivision and is an alternate process available exclusively for non-residential development. Site plan review involves Hearing Examiner/Board action. This review process is intended to ensure non-residential uses are reviewed in an orderly and predictable manner. Unless otherwise established by the Board in its use approval, once the new non-residential activity is completed, discontinued or terminated, the final use approval will expire and the property will revert back to its previous zoning.

7. OVERLAY ZONES

Seven overlay zones will be used to modify development potential. Strictly speaking, each overlay zone is not a zoning classification which regulates densities or uses. Rather the overlay zones create a management system designed to address specific concerns, land form or natural features of importance to the County. For example, maximum permitted density is established by subtracting certain overlay zones from gross acreage.

On the effective date of this Chapter only two of the overlay zones will have been adopted: the wetlands and steep/unstable slopes overlays. A draft of the noise overlay was prepared and was based largely on the Navy's AICUZ study. That study is used nationally and is not tailored to Island County. Therefore action on this overlay has been deferred until it can be adapted more closely to the conditions and uses permitted in the County or until land use standards such as noise attenuation

resource, critical drainage and historic overlays will be developed in 1985.

Wetlands serve many valuable functions including fish, waterfowl and wildlife habitat, educational and aesthetic values, flood conveyance and storage, sediment erosion, pollution control and groundwater recharge. These values have only recently been recognized and are not yet fully understood. Restoration of damaged wetlands is difficult and costly, if not impossible. Therefore, in an effort to protect and enhance wetlands, the wetlands overlay establishes buffers around wetlands and their tributary streams and provides standards for uses adjacent to wetlands. The Code also provides very strict restoration and monitoring requirements in the event that these standards are violated.

The wetlands overlay is intended to govern the County's fresh water wetlands. Development of shorelines, tidal and subtidal wetlands and their associated wetlands should be regulated by the Island County Shoreline Management Master Program, Chapter 16.20A ICC. The wetlands overlay and the Shoreline Master Program are intended to complement one another rather than to overlap and possibly conflict. Since its adoption, the Shoreline Management Master Program has come to be used as a project-by-project licensing tool rather than a comprehensive planning tool. This evolution in its function was reflected in many of the public hearings held on the wetlands overlay. That testimony suggests that the Shoreline Management Master Program does not adequately protect the County's saltwater marshes, bogs and swamps. In particular, the Shoreline Management Master Program does not contain setbacks and land use standards for buildings and drainage. Therefore these saltwater bogs, marshes and swamps will be treated as valuable wetlands for a limited period of time until the County has the opportunity to look at this issue again when it develops its water resource and critical drainage overlays. Additionally, through monitoring and evaluation the County may discover that there are other gaps between these two regulatory programs and/or that either needs to be modified, to better achieve its purpose of protecting wetlands and associated wetlands.

The wetlands overlay does not distinguish between man-made or artificial and naturally occurring wetlands. Testimony in many of the public hearings held on the wetlands overlay suggested that application of the overlay to man-made wetlands may discourage the creation of wetlands or ponds, which is not the intent of the County. Therefore, the County may wish to take this factor into account in evaluating a proposal to alter a wetland in order to give the County the opportunity to look at this issue in conjunction with its review of the Shoreline Management Master Program and development of water resource and critical drainage overlays.