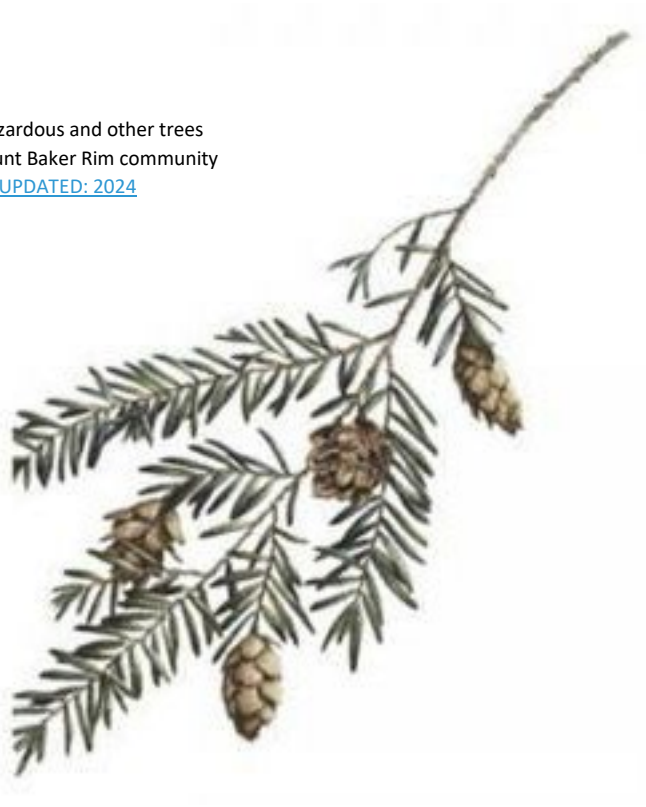
Mount Baker Rim
Community Tree Removal Policy

Managing hazardous and other trees
within the Mount Baker Rim community
LAST UPDATED: 2024



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POLICY AND RULES

The Mount Baker Rim community prides itself on being a community nestled in the Mount Baker National Forest wilderness at the foot of Mount Baker. As such, it is the desire of this community to minimize the unnecessary removal of trees while maintaining a safe environment for community members to enjoy the fullness of what this wilderness community has to offer.

The purpose of this document is to communicate the Mount Baker Rim's guidelines on hazardous tree identification and removal, and to provide an easy-to-follow process for the removal of trees that pose an impediment to construction while at the same time maintaining the wooded feel that makes this community so special.

***A "Significant tree"* defined as a tree with a diameter of 9" (nine inches) or more as measured 5' (five feet) from the base where the tree's trunk meets the soil.**

***A "Heritage tree"* is a tree with a diameter of 36" thirty-six inches or more as measured 5' (five feet) from the base where the tree's trunk meets the soil. Heritage trees are considered to be irreplaceable. No permission will be granted to remove a heritage tree unless the tree is sick or diseased as diagnosed by an ISA Certified Arborist.**

Trees that do not meet the criteria of "Significant tree" or "Heritage Tree" are exempt from this policy and may be removed. The Property Standards Director must be notified prior to the removal of any tree that measures 8" or larger in diameter at the base of the trunk to determine if the tree is exempt or subject to requirements for removal as stated in the Tree Policy.

For questions pertaining to this document and to the Mount Baker Rim Community Club's guidelines for nuisance and hazardous tree removal, please contact the Property Standards Director.

NOTE: Properties that fall within 200' of Glacier Creek may be subject to rules pertaining to "Shorelines of Statewide Significance". Members with properties along Glacier Rim Drive are requested to please contact the Whatcom County Department of Natural Resources for the appropriate permits BEFORE disturbing ANY vegetation to ensure that they comply with all Whatcom County and Washington State rules and members shall provide the appropriate permits before requesting tree removal.

Mount Baker Rim Hazard Assessment for Members

Hazardous trees on a Members property that pose a danger to persons or property shall be removed. The Member should contact the Property Standards Director and advise them of the hazardous tree and the intent to remove it.

The Property Standards Director and the Community manager will review the alleged Hazardous tree. In the event that they agree the tree is Hazardous, permission from the Property Standards Director will be given in writing to remove the tree. (Should one of these two MBRCC positions be vacant, the MBRCC President may serve). In the event that the Property Standards Director and Community Manager disagree, the member must submit a report from an ISA certified arborist to MBRCC's Property Standards Director. The report must state that the tree is Hazardous as defined in the standards proposed by the USDA in the Hazardous Trees in Alaska – USDA.pdf (2009) and/ or the appropriate ISA TRAQ guidelines. A form is included in this document and is provided in Appendix A for reference. Written permission from the MBRCC's Property Standards Director must be given prior to removal unless there is imminent danger to persons or property.

Heritage Trees

Heritage trees are considered to be irreplaceable. No permission will be granted to remove a heritage tree unless the tree is sick or diseased as diagnosed by an ISA Certified Arborist or is approved by a vote of 3/4 of the MBRCC Board.

Other/ Nuisance Tree Removal

The Mount Baker Rim Community has determined that unless ***Significant or Heritage*** trees present an imminent threat to life, property, or pose a significant impediment to approved construction in the Mount Baker Rim, they shall not be removed. Exceptions may be made for Significant trees or Heritage trees on a case-by-case basis if sufficient justification is provided to the Mount Baker Rim board, however, such cases must be documented and presented to the board in writing 30 days prior to a meeting. Removal must be approved by majority consensus of the board members present at the meeting.

HAZARDOUS TREES CRITERIA

The United States Department of Agriculture and Forest Service define a Hazardous Tree as follows:

> *" … a tree is considered potentially hazardous if:*
>
> *it has defects which predispose all or part of the tree to failure,* ***and***
>
> *it is located so that the failure poses a threat to people or property."*[1]

The USDA continues to state:

"Hazard increases with four factors:

A. *Potential for tree failure*
B. *Potential for striking a target*
C. *Potential for serious damage of the target*
D. *Value of target."*

The Mount Baker Rim Community Club and its board of directors have decided to assume the USDA's guidelines on how to quantify the hazard of a tree in order to simplify the assessment of hazardous trees in the Mount Baker Rim community.

Hazardous Tree Identification

This section outlines the identification of hazardous trees as per the USDA's rating system and is divided into four sections:

1) Determining the potential for tree failure
2) Determining the potential for a tree striking a target
3) Determining the potential for serious damage to the target
4) Assessing the value of the target

Potential for Tree Failure

Effectively, the critical factor in assessing the potential for tree failure according to the USDA is to assess whether the tree has defects in the "Failure Zone" – this is the zone extending from four feet above the ground to the first living branch.

[1] REFERENCE: Hazard Trees in Alaska – A Guide to the Identification and Management of Hazard Trees in Alaska - 2009

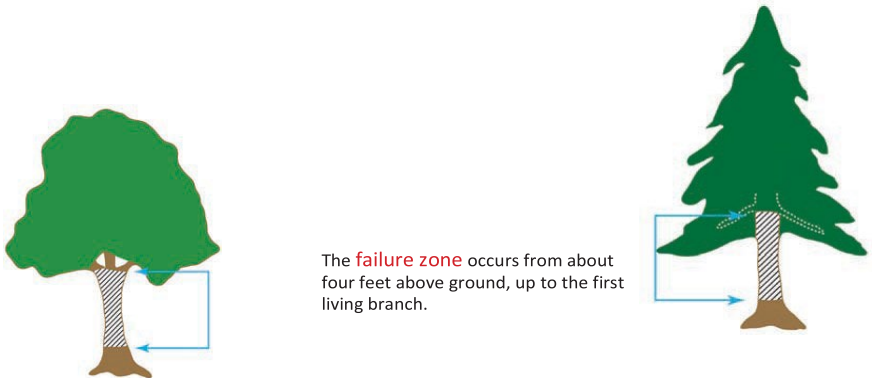


Figure 1: Tree Failure Zone[2]

Trees found by an arborist to have **major defects** in this critical area are considered to be prone to failure and should be considered for removal.

Potential for Striking a Target

The potential for trees falling on a target is effectively determined by the height of the tree and the distance to the target in question. If the target in question is farther than the height of the tree, then the tree does not pose a threat EVEN IF the tree is otherwise prone to failure.

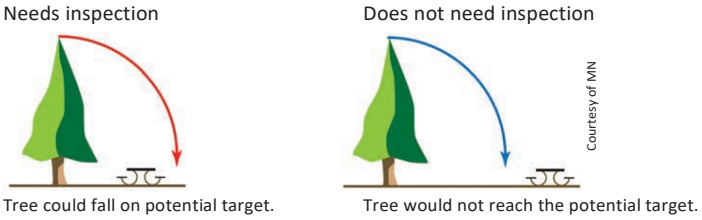


Figure 2: Tree to Target Distance[3]

Potential for Serious Damage

Any tree of a certain size (e.g. with a trunk diameter of greater than 9" as measured 5 feet from the soil) is considered to be a "Significant tree" by the Mount Baker Rim Community. Significant trees are subject to scrutiny prior to removal. These trees may also have large branches or drop other debris that may be considered hazardous; however, this is not part of the hazardous tree assessment.

Value of the Target

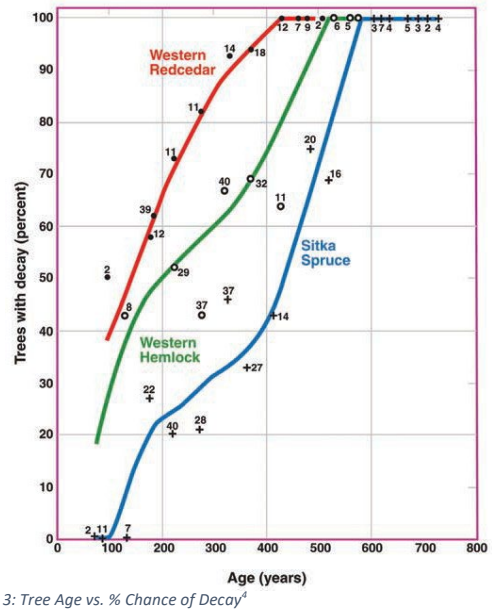
For the purpose of this document and the policy it represents, any human life, dwelling or permanent structure (garages, carports, etc.) for which building permits were required are considered high value targets and should be considered when evaluating trees.

Other Factors

Other factors to consider, according to the USDA are:

- Site factors
- Tree age and size
- Trees species

In particular, the USDA sites exposure to wind, soil conditions, slope, and history of tree failure in its site factors. Such factors should be considered by an arborist prior to tree removal. Furthermore, large trees present a more significant hazard than small trees. Heart rot is highly associated with tree age and should be considered.



Relationship of tree age to the percent of trees with decay. (Graph modified from Kimmey 1956

Figure 3: Tree Age vs. % Chance of Decay[4]

Certain tree species are also more prone to damage, decay, etc. For more information on the tree species most prone to decay and failure, please read the Hazard Trees in Alaska – USDA.pdf

[1]REFERENCE: Hazard Trees in Alaska – A Guide to the Identification and Management of Hazard Trees in Alaska – 2009
[2] Source: Hazardous Trees in Alaska – USA 2009
[3] Source: Hazardous Trees in Alaska – USA 2009
[4] Source: Hazardous Trees in Alaska – USA 2009

Mount Baker Rim
Community Club

HAZARDOUS TREE INSPECTION FORM

MBR Site Address:

MBR Member Name:

MBR Inspector Name(s):

Date of Inspection:

Remarks:

SITE MAP SHOWING LOCATION OF BUILDINGS & TREES

TREE #	TREE LOCATION	TREE SPECIES	TREE DEFECT(S)	HAZARD POTENIAL (H/M/L)	REMARKS OR NOTES	RECOMMENDED ACTION(S) (REMOVE, TOP, PRUNE, ETC.)	ACTION TAKEN (DATE)

APPROVED BY: _____ POSITION: _____

APPROVAL DATE: _____ LOCATION: _____