Watershed Development Guidelines for Anadromous Fish Spawning (April 18, 2025).

1. Concentrate growth into already developed areas, saving rural lands that create the best habitat conditions.
2. Conserving spawning habitat is linked to conserving forests, wetlands, and working farms, and conserving these areas to the maximum extent possible for fisheries should be a top priority.
3. Adopt a low development, natural resource protection scenario for your comprehensive plan – this would be a scenario that is likely to impact spawning habitat the least.
4. A target level of rural development, 5% impervious surface or ≤ 0.31 structures per hectare (1 structure per 8.5 acres), supports desirable spawning habitat needed for anadromous fish.
5. A threshold level of suburban development where increasingly intractable problems related to spawning habitat is 10% impervious surface or 0.84 structures per hectare (1 structure per 3 acres).
6. Beyond 15% impervious surface or 1.51 structures per hectare (1 structure per 1.5 acres), severe spawning habitat degradation and low production are expected.
7. Apply innovative stormwater, flow, and sediment management to development. Do not rely on stormwater to restore or maintain spawning habitat in lieu of watershed conservation.
8. Management and control of erosion from construction must be improved and vigorously enforced. Construction contributes a disproportionate load of sediment for the portion of the watershed it occupies.
9. Stream revitalization measures such as wetland creation, water quality forestry, and expanded riparian buffers should be applied to further control erosion, manage flow, and improve water quality.
10. Stream revitalization measures could/should follow if flow and sediment management succeeds.
11. When de-icing roads, the amount of salt should be minimized and the use of alternative de-icers that are less toxic is recommended.
12. Invasive stream restoration techniques should only be applied to severely degraded streams that have lost most of their ecological function. Do not expect spawning to return with these techniques.
13. Environmental management measures should be paired with monitoring to evaluate success. Very little is known about how stormwater management impacts fish habitat and fisheries.