

Associated Builders and Contractors, Inc. Green Building Toolbox Talks



Sustainable Sites Credit 5.1 (SSc5.1): Site Development-Protect or Restore Habitat

Pre-Construction **Early Construction** Mid Construction Late Construction After Construction

Purpose

During the past several weeks, we have talked about how the work we do will affect the project's LEED certification and rating. Achieving Sustainable Sites Credit 5.1 (SSc5.1): Site Development-Protect or Restore Habitat is one of the credits that depends on our work!

SSc5.1: Site Development-Protect or Restore Habitat

The LEED category of Sustainable Sites (SS) has one prerequisite and 26 available credit points. The prerequisites and credits are divided into those things that the design team has to do and the things we, as the construction team, have to do if we want to achieve the LEED certification. This is one of the credits that is defined as our responsibility. In general, this credit aims to conserve natural areas or restore sites that have been built on previously. The goal is to have areas around this building where plants can grow and animals can live. There are two different ways to earn this credit. The path we choose to follow depends on whether the site is new or previously developed.

This Project

The rating system we are using is LEED 2009 for (Choose: New Construction and Major Renovations, Core and Shell, etc.). This project is trying to get a (Specify level: Certified, Silver, Gold, OR Platinum) level with (Specify number) points. Because we are on a (Specify if the site is a Greenfield (new) OR a previously developed site), we must follow (Specify Case 1 or Case 2 and retain the appropriate section below).

Case 1 - A New Site

We must limit site disturbance. The LEED rating system instructs that our work must stay within:

- 40 feet of the outside of the building
- 10 feet past sidewalks, patios, and parking lots and 15 feet past the curbs
- 10 feet of excavations for utilities under 12 inches and 15 feet of main utilities
- 25 feet of planted areas

The drawings we have indicate what areas we can work in. On this site, we will install (Specify snow fence, flagging, warning tape or other method) to indicate the areas that are **off limits**. Everybody onsite must pay attention to the areas where they are working.

Driving a piece of equipment or parking your vehicle in an area that is marked as **off limits** can ruin our chances of achieving this credit. When you are moving material or staging things to do your work, it must be inside of the marked areas. If you are working with a crew that is excavating for a utility line or foundation, be sure to check with your foreman or crew leader so you know where the spoil pile needs to be. The area of disturbance includes spoils and stockpiled material. Deep excavations that we normally bench back for safety reasons might require shoring. When shoring is required for a deep excavation, be sure that you and the rest of the crew are following all safety precautions. If you are not sure if an area is **off limits**, ask before you go in and start working.

Case 2 - A Previously Developed Site

Because we are working on a site that used to have a building on it, there are fewer rules that we need to follow than if we were working on a new site. That does not mean we can just do anything we want when we are working on this site. The owner has made the decision to restore a certain amount of the site by planting native or adapted vegetation types. Native species are trees, grass and plants that are local to this area. These types of plants require less water and maintenance than other plantings that are not used to the weather in this area. The plants we are going to use on this site may be different from what we normally put in, so we need to make sure it is done the right way or we may end up having to do it over. Once these areas have been planted, stay clear so that they have time to get established. Walking or driving over these areas will damage the plants.

