

NOTICE OF PUBLIC WORKSHOP

Skagit County Will Be Hosting A Workshop and Soliciting Public Comment On The Critical Areas Monitoring And Adaptive Management Program

**Thursday, December 6, 2007, 7-9 P.M.
Skagit County Commissioner's Hearing Room
1800 Continental Place, Mount Vernon, WA**

Notice is hereby given that Skagit County will be presenting data and seeking public comment on the Critical Areas Monitoring and Adaptive Management Program. This program monitors stream water quality and stream habitat conditions to help evaluate the effects of agricultural operations and other land use activities on fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas (riparian critical areas).

Background: Skagit County's Resolution #R20040211 calls for a three-year review of the water quality and habitat monitoring program and its data. The adaptive management provision requires the Critical Areas Ordinance be amended if necessary to provide protection of habitat critical to salmon recovery. In 2007 the Washington State Legislature passed SSB 5248 imposing a 3 year timeout on any changes to a Critical Areas Ordinance impacting agricultural activities.

Within the constraints of SSB 5248 the Skagit County Public Works Department, in consultation with Planning and Development Services, will conduct a review of the County's Monitoring and Adaptive Management program, seek public feedback, hold a staff-led public workshop, and submit a summary of the comments and testimony received to the Board of County Commissioners. The County also plans to provide the County's water quality and salmon habitat monitoring program data and sampling analysis methods to the Washington State University Water Research Center for an independent scientific review, and report with recommendations in preparation for changes to the Critical Areas Ordinance after the SSB 5248 timeout expires in 2010.

Availability of Documents: Existing water quality and salmon habitat monitoring data and annual reports are available on the Internet at www.skagitcounty.net/salmonstrategy, and at the Skagit County Department of Public Works, 1800 Continental Place, Mount Vernon, Washington. Office hours are 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Monday through Friday.

How to Comment: Your views on the existing Monitoring and Adaptive Management program are invited by attendance, representation, letter, or fax. Written correspondence may be mailed to the Department of Planning and Development Services, 1800 Continental Place, Mount Vernon, Washington, 98273-5625, or faxed to (360) 336-9416. Written comments will be accepted at Planning and Development Services until 4:30 p.m. Monday, December 24, 2007. Written comment will also be accepted during the public workshop. Written comments must be submitted on 8 ½" x 11" sized paper and in black and white for reproduction purposes.

For citizens with special needs, the hearing room is accessible. Persons with special needs or disabilities are asked to call the Commissioners' Office at (360) 336-9300 at least 4 days before the hearing to discuss and arrange any needed accommodations.

Staff contact person: Tom Karsh, Special Projects Administrator - can be reached by phone (360) 419-3373 or email at tomk@co.skagit.wa.us with questions.

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