

Meeting #11 Shoreline Advisory Committee DRAFT SUMMARY  
May 8, 2012  
Skagit County Board of Commissioners' Hearing Room

SAC members present: Kevin Bright, Bill Dewey, Herb Goldston, Michael Hughes, Tim Hyatt, Kraig Knutzen, Brian Lipscomb and Jim Wiggins

SAC members absent: Scott Andrews, Wayne Crider, Oscar Graham, Chuck Haigh, Daryl Hamburg, Ward Krkoska, Kim Mower, Jon Ostlund and Shirley Solomon

Others present: Betsy Stevenson, Skagit County SMP Project Manager; Dan Nickel, The Watershed Company; Lisa Grueter, BERK

New handout materials made available to committee members:

1. Meeting #11 Agenda
2. Meeting #11 Discussion Guide – Working Draft SMP
3. Preliminary Draft Sections
  - Boating Facilities
  - In-Stream Structures
  - Shoreline Habitat and Natural Systems Enhancement
  - Water Quality
  - Administrative Provisions

The first topic on the agenda was **Opening Comments and Recap**. All draft materials have now been distributed as individual sections and the project team is in the process of creating one SMP document with policies separated from the code regulations. Consultants and staff noted that these versions are still in rough draft form and many sections have not been through a complete County review. County staff will be working to complete their review over the next 2 weeks prior to Planning Commission (PC) meetings. Staff discussed with the SAC the possibility of having additional SAC meetings in June and July ahead of the DOE submittal. Most members present agreed that would be a good idea.

A joint meeting between the SAC and PC is scheduled for May 22. County staff requests that if SAC members have specific issues or sections that they would like to discuss at the meeting that they tell County staff prior to the meeting in order to get the item on the agenda.

**Overview of Distributed Materials.** The consultant team provided a brief overview of the preliminary draft sections of the SMP which were distributed the previous week and ones which were not covered at the last meeting. A roundtable vote was taken to see which sections proved to be of the most interest. The top 6 sections were chosen for **Discussion of Detailed Sections**, the agenda item on which the majority of the SAC meeting was spent.



The first section discussed by the SAC was Agriculture. One SAC member asked how long agricultural land could lay fallow and still be considered agricultural land. The consultants answered that the SMA does not provide a clear answer to this question.

The second section discussed was Critical Areas. Several members of the SAC questioned whether the critical areas material should be embedded within the SMP as it is now, whether the critical areas material should be an appendix to the SMP, or whether the SMP should reference a specific dated version of the Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO). Most felt that an appendix would be good to cut down on the size of the document. Referencing a specific dated version of the CAO was not a good choice. Several members liked having the critical areas material within the main body of the SMP so that it could all be viewed at once. One member noted that for aquaculture, particularly for shellfish, the creation of critical habitat (i.e. shellfish beds) is an issue under the CAO.

The third section discussed was Shoreline Habitat and Natural Systems Enhancement Projects. Several members voiced concern about when a project is deemed an enhancement or restoration project, noting that in the past some projects that have been for the purposes of stabilization have been reviewed under this section. One SAC member noted that within the Skagit basin, such projects should go through the Watershed Council for approval such that if a project is funded by the SRF Board and the Watershed Council then it could be considered to comply with this section. Many SAC members wanted more incentives to remove hard armoring, such as an easier permit process for another land use application. At least one member noted that long-term maintenance and monitoring requirements for enhancement projects need to be better spelled out. How would this apply to a publicly funded SRF Board grant which is no longer funded once installation is complete? DNR should be consulted regarding Regulation (7) to make sure their permit approval timeline fits.

The fourth section discussed was Boating Facilities. The discussion began with mooring buoys. The question was raised regarding the possibility of limiting the density of buoys in bays. Does the SMP address water quality and thereby control density? It was subsequently noted that buoys come in many different sizes with obvious variations in impacts. One member noted an example from Mystery Bay in Jefferson County having to deal with liveaboards. The location standards currently outlined in the draft SMP do not work very well for some of the marine areas throughout the County. It was noted that this language might be taken from freshwater systems. It was suggested that the dimension criteria might be removed or the marine and freshwater regulations might be split up. This also applies to proximity to critical habitats (300 feet seems high). Regarding boat ramps, concern was raised whether the prohibition on private boat ramps would apply to commercial properties (e.g. boat repair facilities which need a private ramp). It was noted that public restrooms were required for new marinas; however, they should be provided for public launch ramps too. Regarding piles, concern was voiced about limiting pile materials to concrete, steel, or untreated wood. A suggestion was made to consider acceptable wood treatments such as ACZA. It was also suggested that recreational floats not be placed within 25 feet of aquatic vegetation. One SAC member voiced strong concern over the mitigation language, indicating that WDFW currently requires more than 1:1 ratio when vegetation is proposed as mitigation for overwater structures. In addition, it was noted that vegetation should be the last resort as mitigation for overwater structures.

The fifth section discussed was Vegetation Conservation. Several members discussed the regulation which allows selective pruning for safety and view protection. One member noted that an arborist should be consulted even when limbing a tree for views, not just safety. Often times allowing limbing rather than clearing will provide for views while keeping the overall cover. Another member noted that

this might be an area in which incentives could be built in. It was noted that Island County is also currently going through their SMP update and that they allow no more than 20 percent shoreline clearing. The County will need to make sure that this section is consistent with the CAO.

The final section discussed was Water Quality. One member pointed out that low impact development (LID) should be required first, and not simply assessed.

The next topic on the agenda was **Roundtable Comments**. This allowed SAC members to voice comments about any issue. It was noted that several members of the aquaculture community were looking into providing substantial edits to that section. Several members voiced praise about how far we have come, but they still do not have a full sense of the scope of the SMP document and are concerned about being prepared for the joint PC meeting. Many SAC members like the idea of incentives.

MEETING ADJOURNED.