

INTRODUCTION

The Shoreline Management Act and the Skagit County Shoreline Master Program are based upon a recognition that shorelines are limited resources-they simply cannot be increased. Also, these resources serve and support a broad and diverse range of activity. Skagit County has a variety and abundance of shorelines, such abundance that control of these shorelines might seem unnecessary or premature. The fact that these shores and shore processes are limited and irreplaceable, while man's demands and his ability to interfere with these processes has increased dramatically, making some management program for these resources necessary to allow continued use and preservation for future generations.

Recognition of these circumstances on a statewide basis led to creation and passage of legislation in 1971, (Alternate 43B) followed by voter approval of shoreline management in general and Alternate 43B in particular in 1972, mandating local development of shoreline master programs to manage and regulate uses and development in shoreline areas. The State, through the Department of Ecology, retains the ability to review local decisions on shoreline permits and provides the guidelines to local governments for the preparation of shoreline master programs.

The Act calls for counties and cities, with assistance from the State, to:

1. inventory shoreline resources and characteristics;
2. develop a permit system to regulate substantial development; and
3. develop a Shoreline Management Program tailored to the needs of each locality for regulation, planning, and management.

The inventory was performed during the summer of 1972 and was subsequently tabulated and is available in a computer printout format. Soon after passage of the Act, a permit system was implemented in compliance with State guidelines. Then, in late 1973, the 60 member Citizen and Technical Advisory Committees, representing a broad cross-section of interests and backgrounds, with the assistance of the Planning Department, worked out the goals, policies, and shoreline area designations. With the goals and policies providing guidelines, the regulations were developed by department staff with Advisory Committee review.

A total of 36 advisory committee meetings were held over the two-year program development period.

Subsequently, the County Planning Commission held six public meetings on the program, discussing and modifying various policies and regulatory standards. These public meetings were held on:

November 17, 1975

December 1 and 15, 1975

January 19, 1976

March 1, 1976

April 5, 1976

June 7, 1976

Also, several special meetings were held with interested groups at their request during the program development period. Among them were:

Skagit County Agricultural Coordinating Council

Skagit County Rural Development Committee

Skagit County Conservation District

Skagit County Farm Bureau and Cattleman's Association

Aquaculture operators

Forest industry representatives

Industry representatives

On May 17, 1976, the Planning Commission held a public hearing as required by the Shoreline Management Act and received comments and suggestions from a number of the 65 persons attending. The Commission then held a public meeting on June 7, considering and making final program changes per the hearing input. The Commission recommended approval and sent the program and map to the Board of County Commissioners for their deliberation and decision.

The County Commissioners held a public meeting on June 29, 1976, whereby they officially adopted the Master Program and Shoreline Area Designation Map as recommended by the Planning Commission. The program and map were sent to the State Department of Ecology for their mandated 90-day review. On October 5, 1976, the State formally approved the Master Program and map, completing the final round of adoption prior to official implementation.