Benton County
Shoreline Master Program Update

Introduction to the SMP
February 4, 2014

Agenda

• Why update the SMP?
• What is the process?
• Where does this apply?
• What are the basic principles of the SMA?
• How has the public been involved?
• What are some key features of the draft SMP?
• Next Steps
Why Update the SMP?

- The Shoreline Management Act requires all local governments to update
  - RCW 90.58 080 requires Benton County be complete by December 2013
  - Ecology funding allows completion by June 2014
- Ecology rules passed in 2003
- County SMP developed in 1974
- Address changed conditions

Shoreline Laws and Rules

**SHORELINE MANAGEMENT ACT (SMA)**

RCW 90.58
To prevent harm caused by uncoordinated and piecemeal development of the state’s major shorelines.

**Shoreline Master Program Guidelines**
WAC 127-26

**Shoreline Master Program (SMP)**
Carries out provisions of SMA
Must be approved by Dept. of Ecology, using policy of RCW 90.58.020 and Guidelines as approval standards/criteria
What is the Process?

Determine Jurisdiction → Inventory & Analysis → SMP (Environment Designations, Goals, Policies, Regulations) → Cumulative Impacts Analysis → Restoration Plan → Local Adoption

We are here

Public Participation

Ecology Review and Adoption

Where Does this Apply?

• Minimum Shoreline Jurisdiction
  – Stream ≥ 20 cfs
  – Upland areas 200 feet from OHWM
  – Floodways and 200 feet of adjacent floodplain area
  – Associated wetlands

• NEW Uses
  – Existing shoreline uses and activities may continue
What are the Basic Principles of the SMA?

• Balance
  – water-oriented uses
  – public access
  – environmental protection
• Preferred Uses
• No Net Loss of Ecological Function

How has the Public been Involved?

✓ Open Houses & Forums (4 sets)
  – Inventory & Analysis
  – Visioning
  – Draft SMP
  – Revised Draft SMP
✓ Shoreline Advisory Committee (14 meetings)
✓ Public Access Focus Group
• Planning Commission Meetings & Hearing
• BOCC Meetings & Hearing
Shoreline Advisory Committee

- 14 volunteers from the community, approved by BOCC
  - Shoreline property owners
  - Shoreline property managers
  - Agri-business interest
  - Economic development interest
  - Environmental interest
  - State and federal agencies
  - Yakama Nation
- 14 regular meetings
- Highly interactive, with SAC input reflected in SMP
Key Features of the SMP

- Recognizes existing conditions
  - Environment designations
  - Shoreline buffers
- Special attention paid to agriculture and single-family residential uses
- Consistent with relevant state and federal regulations
- Flexible, clear and concise

What are Environment Designations?

- A system to classify shoreline areas into different “districts” where particular activities are preferred, e.g. Residential, Rural Industrial
- Functions as an overlay to help manage the shoreline character
- Underlying zoning and development regulations still apply
Proposed Environment Designations

- Rural (existing)
- Conservancy (existing)
- Natural (existing)
- Urban Transition Area (new)
- Rural Industrial (new)
- Residential (new)
- Hanford (new)
- Aquatic (new)
Shoreline Vegetation and Buffers

- Requirements do not apply retroactively to *existing* uses and developments
- Alterations allowed for views and safety
- Buffers:
  - Based on existing conditions
  - Flexibility for water-dependent uses
  - Flexibility for accessory uses and structures
  - Conservancy environment – design standards in lieu of a one-size-fits-all buffer.
  - Existing legal single-family residential development in buffer is a conforming structure.

Water-Oriented Uses

- Water Dependent
  - Uses that can only exist in a shoreline location
  - E.g. ports, marinas
- Water Related
  - Support water-dependent use
  - Has a functional requirement for a waterfront location
  - E.g. arrival or shipment of materials by water
- Water Enjoyment
  - Recreational or other use that provides for public access or aesthetic enjoyment of the shoreline
Agriculture

- Existing agriculture activities can continue – not subject to the SMP
- SMP will allow new agricultural activities

Public Access

- Waters of the state are a public resource for all citizens for the purposes of navigation, conducting commerce, fishing, recreation and similar uses
- Trespassing on private property is not allowed
- SMP addresses public access policies and standards
  - Public access plan prepared
  - Focus is on public lands
Summary of Next Steps

• Planning Commission
  – Introduction, February 2014
  – Workshop, March 2014
  – Hearing and Deliberation, April 2014

• Board of County Commissioners
  – Workshop, May 2014
  – Hearing and Deliberation, June 2014