



# Benton County Shoreline Master Program Update

Introduction to the SMP

February 4, 2014



BENTON COUNTY  
Shoreline Master Program Update

## 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

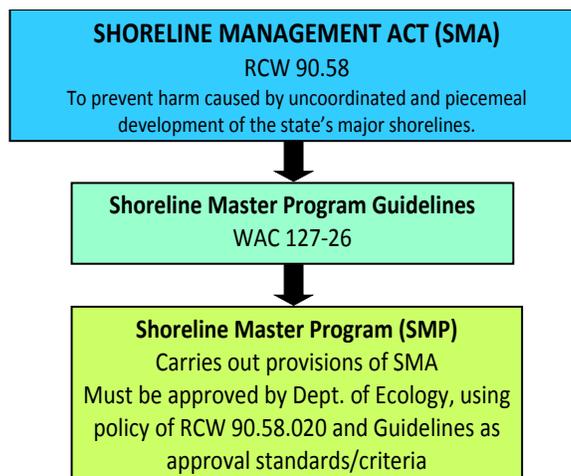


## Why Update the SMP?

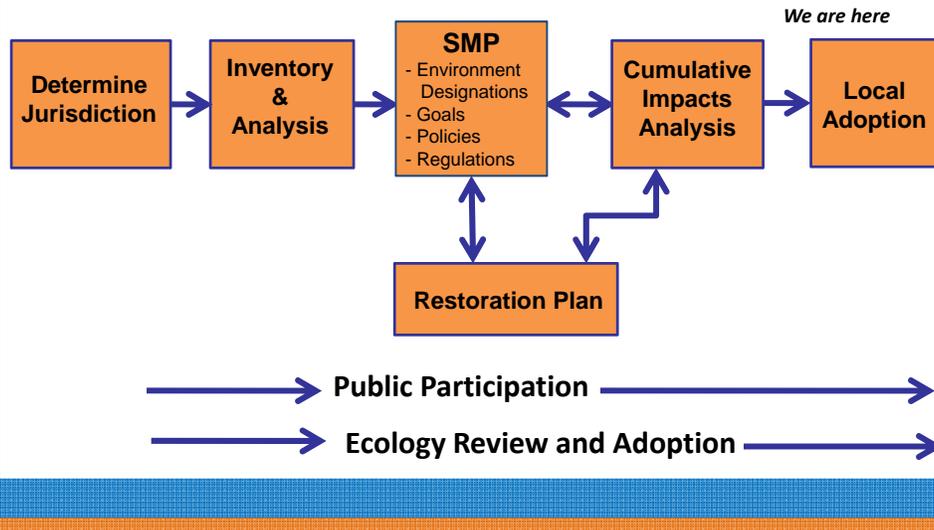
- The Shoreline Management Act requires all local governments to update
  - RCW 90.58 080 requires Benton County be complete by December 2013
  - Ecology funding allows completion by June 2014
- Ecology rules passed in 2003
- County SMP developed in 1974
- Address changed conditions



## Shoreline Laws and Rules



# What is the Process?



# Where Does this Apply?

- **Minimum Shoreline Jurisdiction**
  - Stream  $\geq 20$  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

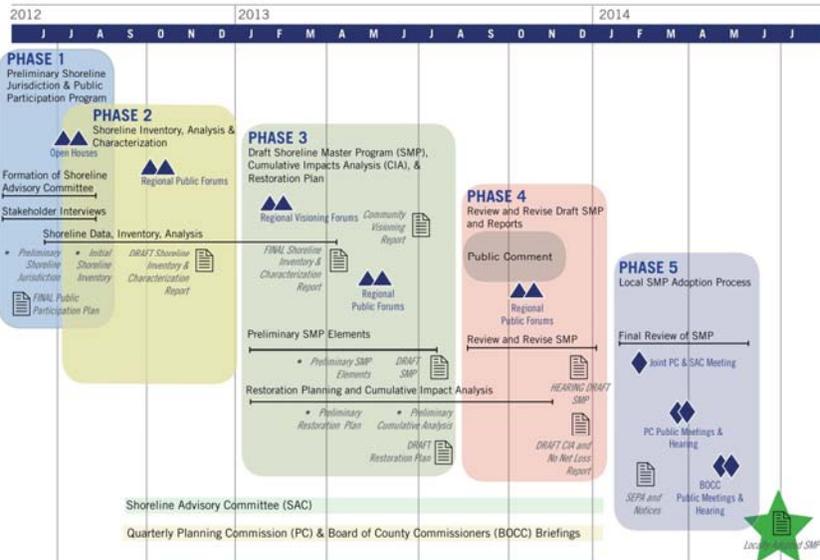


## How has the Public been Involved?

- ✓ 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



## Benton County Shoreline Master Program Update Public Participation Approach



## 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)



## Proposed Environment Designations

Rural Industrial



Rural

## 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