



and Associates

PLANNING, LAND USE
AND DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

Memorandum

Date: November 11, 2013
To: Project Management Team, Shoreline Master Program Updates
From: Bill Stalzer, Project Team Leader
Re: Department of Ecology SMP Planners Meetings

The Department of Ecology holds regular meetings for planners of jurisdictions that are updating their shoreline master programs. All meetings begin with each representative giving a brief description of where they are in the 3-year process and any particular issues they have encountered. These meetings have been held quarterly in Tumwater and as you know, I attended the April and the July meetings. I also attended the October 24th meeting. Beginning this fall Ecology also is holding semi-annual meetings in Spokane and Richland specifically for eastern Washington jurisdictions. I attended the first one which was held on October 3rd. Below is a brief summary of both meetings.

October 3rd SMP Planners Meeting in Richland

Since many of the eastern Washington jurisdictions are just beginning the update process, this meeting focused on the initial required tasks for updating SMPs: public participation plan, preliminary shoreline jurisdiction, and the shoreline inventory and characterization report. Additionally, Jaime Short gave a presentation on the grant fundamentals.

Takeaways:

- Keep no net loss, restoration opportunities, and cumulative impacts in mind from the outset
- Make public participation a number one priority; think of a variety of ways to inform and involve people
- Build a good record
- Remember the shoreline jurisdiction is more than 200 feet from the ordinary high water mark
- Consider development trends, not just current conditions, for the shoreline characterization
- Pay attention to the details in the grant agreement; also, there can be flexibility in grant funding depending on the circumstances

October 24th SMP Planners Meeting in Tumwater

These meetings are focused primarily on jurisdictions in western Washington. The meetings I attended in April and July were particularly useful because they gave me insight into the lessons learned by jurisdictions that are in the 2nd and 3rd years of the update as well as a heads-up about the kinds of issues they have encountered. This information has already proved useful to our situation in many ways:

- getting a website up and running early;
- keeping the website current and leaving all documents posted so citizens can find past information without needing to file a public information request;
- putting the link to Ecology's Citizen's Guide on the opening screen of the project website
- emphasizing that all meetings are open public meetings and taking public comment at meetings;
- keeping track of public participation efforts and citizen attendance at meetings;
- establishing a representative advisory group that includes state and federal agencies; and
- constantly making efforts to inform and involve citizens.

I attended only the afternoon session of this meeting because it had two topics that I felt would be useful for us: A presentation by the Department of Archeological and Historic Preservation on issues related to archeological sites and artifacts; and a presentation by one of the jurisdictions on SMP setbacks related to existing conditions. An unexpected benefit was a reminder from a jurisdiction that had just finished the 3-year process to "keep the long view: your SMP is never going to be perfect; at some point it must get adopted."