



CLALLAM COUNTY
DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT
COUNTY COURTHOUSE
223 E. 4TH ST., SUITE 5
PORT ANGELES, WA 98362-3015
PHONE: (360) 417-2321
FAX: (360) 417-2443
dcdadmin@co.clallam.wa.us

SHEILA ROARK MILLER, DIRECTOR

To: Clallam County No Net Loss Work Group
From: Cathy Lear, Habitat Biologist
Re: Clallam County SMP Update - No Net Loss Work Group Schedule
June 1, 2011

Hello, Work Group Members,

With this memo we provide an update to the schedule and process for the No Net Loss Work Group and offer a brief overview of recent Clallam County SMP update activities.

Background

Clallam County received a grant from Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to supplement their state-funded effort to update the Shoreline Master Program by refining and testing a new approach and method to measure and track changes in ecological function. The new approach will identify and apply indicators of ecological function in the shoreline inventory and characterization process to inform development of SMP programs and policies. By being systematic and quantitative in the development of the SMP, Clallam County hopes to improve its ability to assess whether its programs and policies are achieving the desired outcomes - and if not, to identify where the losses in ecosystem function are occurring. We expect this work to be useful for counties and cities across Puget Sound in their SMP update process and during SMP implementation.

Work Group Purpose

The Work Group provides guidance and feedback to Clallam County staff and consultants through working sessions and dialogue to help ensure the indicators and the scale selected for the indicators are:

- Scientifically sound;
- Relevant, feasible and useful in Clallam County (including WRIA 20) to SMP decision-making and Ecology's update process and requirements;
- Contribute to the Puget Sound Partnership's efforts to track and support local efforts; and
- Broadly applicable to jurisdictions across Puget Sound.

The group will also provide guidance and feedback on the extent to which the proposed SMP policies and regulations address threats to ecosystem functions, mitigate potential impacts and create a restoration program for unavoidable impacts.

Clallam SMP update activities

Since the first meeting of the No Net Loss Workgroup in December, Clallam County has focused on public input and data analysis. The County convened focus groups to determine how to best structure the community forums; conducted the first series of community forums; and established a Shoreline Advisory Committee to help develop strategies for the SMP. The Shoreline Advisory Committee first met

in April and will hold its second meeting July 12. Community forums will be held in Forks on June 9, and in Port Angeles, Sekiu, Joyce, and Sequim in mid-July.

Two draft documents are now available for review.

You can find them at http://www.clallam.net/RealEstate/html/shoreline_management.htm

Draft Clallam County SMP Update - Consistency Review Report evaluates how the 35-year old existing SMP meets current state requirements, how it addresses the range of development scenarios that are likely to occur in the foreseeable future, and identifies gaps and inconsistencies and ways to improve clarity/administration to assist in the update process.

Draft WRIA 20 Inventory and Characterization Report describes current shoreline conditions and characterizes the ecosystem processes that shape and impact shorelines of statewide significance in WRIA 20 and the Forks Urban Growth Area. The draft Inventory and Characterization Report will be the focus of two community forums held on June 9 in Forks.

Draft Inventory and Characterization Report: WRIA 20 and Strait of Juan de Fuca

The Inventory and Characterization report forms the basis from which the indicators are developed and tested, and is a key document for the No Net Loss Work Group. The Work Group will use the report to provide feedback for selecting and testing no net loss indicators. The *Draft WRIA 20 Inventory and Characterization Report*, which characterizes shorelines on Clallam County streams draining to the Pacific Coast, is currently available for review. A draft of the *Inventory and Characterization Report* that describes Clallam County shorelines along or draining to the Strait of Juan de Fuca will be available in June for work group members to review and analyze for a discussion on the possible no net loss indicators. The final Inventory and Characterization report (due December 2011) will incorporate the feedback from the work group and others on the no net loss indicators.

Time Commitment

The No Net Loss Work Group has committed to meet four times between December 2010 and Spring 2012. The first meeting occurred in December 2010. Summary notes from that meeting are attached. The three remaining meetings are scheduled as follows:

August 2011 – The second meeting, originally planned for late spring, will occur in August. This allows the work group members time to consider the findings of the draft Inventory and Characterization report, the Community Forums' and SMP Advisory Committee's feedback, and to prepare for a discussion on the possible no net loss indicators.

October/November 2011 – The third meeting will focus on issues raised during the Community Forums and SMP Advisory Committee meetings related to the development of goals and policies from the Inventory and Characterization work. Specifically, the group will provide feedback on the effectiveness of the indicators in showing the linkage between shoreline conditions and draft goals and policies. At this meeting, work group members will provide feedback on the establishment of baseline conditions using the indicators.

Spring 2012 – The last meeting will seek feedback and guidance on the Clallam County SMP package, the No Net Loss summary, and its approach relative to the usefulness of the indicators. We will incorporate this feedback into a report to help local jurisdictions and the Washington Department of Ecology to use as a guide from the Clallam pilot project.

Thank you again for your willingness to participate on the No Net Loss Workgroup and to offer your expertise as we delve further into the issues of effective SMP implementation.



Clallam County Shoreline Master Program Update

No Net Loss Work Group

Update Following Meeting #1

In December 2010, Clallam County staff and consultants working on the County's Shoreline Master Program update met with representatives from 15 organizations to begin discussing strategies and approaches for assessing no net loss. The group was convened specifically to investigate how "indicators" of ecological functions could be used to assess no net loss in a way that would guide SMP planning, implementation and monitoring. This document provides a brief summary of the discussion and describes the next steps.

Meeting participants received briefing materials in advance of the meeting that described a suite of initial indicators being considered for the no net loss assessment. During the meeting, the consultants described the rationale for the initial list of indicators and asked the participants for feedback. Participants questioned the suggested indicators and voiced concerns that they might not allow for a complete and robust evaluation of shoreline functions. Participants also offered a number of additional / alternative indicators for consideration. Below is a summary of some of the themes that emerged from the meeting:

- Concern that the suggested performance indicators are isolated measures and do not provide feedback about ecosystem functions and the importance of interconnectivity.
- Questions about how no net loss will address competing ecological functions. Actions that improve bird habitat may degrade habitat for elk or fish. It was also pointed out that the larger scale of no net loss assessment will help move away from either/or tradeoffs since it allows the county to direct development and protection actions on a broader level.
- Suggestion to address the issue of protection of existing (and possibly degraded) conditions as well as restoration. It was pointed out that the recovery of Puget Sound requires more than no net loss.
- Quantification of no net loss must be tailored to different scales: permit decisions made at the level of an individual parcel and assessments of ecological functions at the reach, watershed, and county-wide scale.
- Information on shoreline functions (collected via the SMP) must provide a strong rationale for decision-making and a better way to track what happens thereafter.

Clallam County Shoreline Master Program Update

The County needs help with permit decisions—documenting areas of habitat, feeder bluffs, etc.

- Historic conditions should be considered as definitions for performance indicators are developed (i.e., historic information about vegetation types and locales can assist in defining a vegetation indicator).
- New activities such as tidal power, submerged recreational structures, and new access uses on parklands should be considered as part of the SMP update.

Based on this feedback as well as comments that some participants provided following the meeting, we are revising our approach to selecting indicators. We are working on a more complete assessment of shoreline attributes to provide a more comprehensive “picture” of ecological conditions. Our hope is that a list of acceptable indicators can be developed from that comprehensive evaluation. We are working to develop examples that test approaches for quantifying attributes (such as % floodplain unobstructed by levees, dams, or armoring) at the parcel, reach and watershed scales. We will complete the examples by spring and will seek additional input and schedule another work group meeting at that time. The County is also setting up a shoreline advisory committee and we will test the examples with the new committee as well as at public forums to be held this summer.

Please contact Cathy Lear at clear@co.clalla.wa.us or 360.417.2361 if you have questions or comments.