

Hickey, Lisa

From: Gary Walderman <Americanheroescafe@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 15, 2025 7:46 AM
To: Low, Sam
Subject: Please Protect Our Orcas, Salmon and Water and Improve the Critical Areas Regulations



CAUTION. This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

Council Member,

I support Futurewise's recommendations to better protect Chinook salmon habitats, orcas, and to improve Snohomish County's Critical Areas Regulations. Please adopt the following recommendations to protect baby orcas and our water quality, wildlife and fish habitats, our water quality and drinking water and to meet requirements of Best Available Science (BAS) and the Growth Management Act (GMA).

1. Adopt 200-foot buffers on streams, rivers and shorelines that are home to salmon and other fish species and 100-foot buffers on other streams and shorelines measured from the channel migration zone edge or active floodplain to protect against more declines in salmon stocks and to reduce deaths among southern resident orcas.
2. Designate WDFW priority habitats and species as fish and wildlife conservation areas and base the protection of these habitats and species on the WDFW Management Recommendations, which is required to comply with the GMA.
3. Designate and protect rare plant categories and listings from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Natural Heritage Program, to comply with GMA.
4. Adopt the amendments to better protect development from channel migration zones, which have a high potential to damage buildings and structures.
5. Adopt the amendments to protect ground water from water pollution to protect our drinking water sources.
6. Update the definition of Critical Areas to include WDFW Priority Habitats and Species and the rare plant categories and listings from DNR's Natural Heritage Program.
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9. Add a requirement to document the applicant's efforts to avoid and minimize impacts to the critical area or buffer. Avoidance is the cheapest and most effective method for protecting critical areas.
10. Do not adopt Amendment 1 or other amendments that allow for narrower buffers or filling wetlands without compensating for their lost functions. Narrower buffers will not protect rivers, streams, and wetlands. Buffer averaging should not result in buffers narrower than 75 percent of the required buffer at any point. Filling wetlands without replacing the lost functions will adversely impact fish and wildlife habitats and other wetland benefits.

Thank you for adopting these recommendations.

Sincerely,
Gary Walderman
5115 153rd Place SW
Edmonds, WA 98026

Hickey, Lisa

From: Bob Danson <bobd@ovwater.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 3, 2024 10:32 AM
To: Mead, Jared; Dunn, Megan; Nehring, Nate; Low, Sam; Peterson, Strom; Contact Council
Cc: Kelly Boswell; Billy Ward
Subject: Comments on Critical Areas Regulations and CARA Updates



CAUTION. This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

Dear Members of the Snohomish County Planning and Community Development Committee, My name is Bob Danson, and I am the General Manager of the Olympic View Water & Sewer District. I want to thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the latest updates to the Critical Areas regulations, particularly those concerning Critical Aquifer Recharge Areas (CARAs).

First, I want to acknowledge and appreciate the meaningful improvements made in response to earlier feedback. Provisions such as requiring notification for certain projects are a step in the right direction. However, we still have significant concerns about the proposed regulations and their potential impact on drinking water sources. One of our primary concerns is the lack of an explicit prohibition on UIC wells in CARAs. While the Phase I permit is referenced as justification, it merely requires Low Impact Development (LID) as the preferred approach. It does not prohibit jurisdictions from restricting UIC wells to protect drinking water. In fact, protecting drinking water is required under both the Growth Management Act (GMA) and federal regulations, including 40 CFR 144. Additionally, the current draft lacks a comprehensive notification process. It does not ensure that Group A water providers are informed of projects that claim to “automatically” meet non-endangerment under WAC 173-218-100. This assumption of automatic compliance is inconsistent with federal law, which mandates case-by-case assessments of endangerment. Without notice, water providers cannot evaluate or act to protect drinking water resources.

We also have concerns with several provisions in WAC 173-218-100:

- Subsection 1(h) assumes “non-pollution” generating surfaces are safe, even though they can discharge contaminants like PFAS.
- Subsection 1(i) references inert materials, but these often include PFAS-based substances that pose serious risks to groundwater.
- Subsection 2 broadly allows runoff from residential roofs and basement flooding without considering their composition, location, or potential cumulative impacts.

Further, exclusions under WAC -050, -040, and -100, coupled with section .340’s lack of specific mention of UIC wells, weaken these protections. UIC wells permitted under WAC 173-218-100 can carry contaminants, including PFAS, and pose a direct threat to drinking water aquifers. These risks contradict the assumption of non-endangerment and highlight the need for stricter review. While section .345 allows Group A water providers to impose conditions, it is artificially limited. Without proper notice and full authority, we cannot adequately protect critical drinking water resources.

To address these concerns, we urge the Planning Commission to:

1. Ensure that Group A water providers are notified of all proposed developments in CARAs that could impact drinking water.
2. Provide these providers with clear authority to impose conditions, including restricting infiltration where contamination risks exist.
3. Require thorough review of all projects to ensure alignment with state and federal drinking water protection laws.
4. Prohibit UIC wells in CARAs to provide an added layer of protection for drinking water sources.

Thank you again for your efforts to improve these regulations and for addressing many of our earlier concerns. Your work has made significant progress, and we look forward to continuing to collaborate to safeguard our community's drinking water for future generations.

Sincerely,

Bob Danson, General Manager
Olympic View Water and Sewer District
8128 228th Street SW
Edmonds, WA 98026-8449
bobd@ovwater.com
p: (425) 774-7769



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Hickey, Lisa

From: Marjorie Fields <mvfields@me.com>
Sent: Saturday, December 14, 2024 10:53 AM
To: SCO-Council
Subject: protect wetland buffers



CAUTION. This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

I am shocked at the idea of a fence replacing up to half of required buffer width. Where is the science that would support such a plan? This sounds like yet another "give away" to developers.

Please do not let this happen.

Marjie Fields

Hickey, Lisa

From: Cheesman, Darcy
Sent: Monday, January 27, 2025 9:09 AM
To: Hickey, Lisa
Subject: FW: Wetland Ordinance Changes

Follow Up Flag: Follow up
Flag Status: Completed

For records

Darcy Cheesman | *Legislative Aide to Councilmember Sam Low*

District 5

3000 Rockefeller Ave., M/S #609 | Everett, WA 98201-4046

O: 425.388.3494 | M: 425.512.1004 | darcy.cheesman@snoco.org

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From: Howard Lazzarini <lazzarini.howard@gmail.com>

Sent: Monday, January 13, 2025 2:53 PM

To: Low, Sam <Sam.Low@co.snohomish.wa.us>

Subject: Wetland Ordinance Changes



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Dear Mr. Low,

I read the following in the Herald:

For the past year, the Washington State Department of Ecology has worked with Snohomish County's Planning and Development Services to help update the Critical Area Regulations ordinance, which cover wetlands, fish and wildlife conservation areas, geologically hazardous areas, aquifer recharge areas and some flood hazard areas.

But council members Jared Mead and Nate Nehring have introduced amendments to the ordinance, decreasing environmental protections to create flexibility for possible development.

It would appear that both Mead and Nehring are trying for an end run around the Washington State Department of Ecology and Snohomish County's Planning and Development Services to try and ramrod through a radical change in ordinances that mandate environmentally responsible development? I want to go on record as being an advocate for scientific studies to be conducted before any changes are recklessly made. I would oppose these changes without the necessary due diligence. Please vote against Mead and Nerhring's plan.

Sincerely,

Howard Lazzarini

Hickey, Lisa

From: Cindy Barker <cindybarker2021@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2025 4:05 PM
To: Low, Sam
Subject: Please Protect Our Orcas, Salmon and Water and Improve the Critical Areas Regulations



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Council Member,

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Thank you for adopting these recommendations.

Sincerely,
Cindy Barker
9649 E, Ebola Ave
Mesa, AZ 85208

Hickey, Lisa

From: Kristine Calawa <kcalawa@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2025 9:30 PM
To: Low, Sam
Subject: Please Protect Our Orcas, Salmon and Water and Improve the Critical Areas Regulations



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Thank you for adopting these recommendations.

Sincerely,
Kristine Calawa
13828 60th Ave W
Edmonds, WA 98026

Hickey, Lisa

From: mwemae@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2025 7:13 PM
To: Low, Sam; Mead, Jared; Peterson, Strom; Dunn, Megan; Nehring, Nate
Subject: Snohomish County Critical Areas Regulation



CAUTION. This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

Mr. Low and Fellow Council Members,

As a 35+ year resident of Snohomish County District 5 (Silver Lake area) and practicing environmental scientist, I am very concerned about the Council amending the Critical Areas Regulation to reduce wetland buffers. While I certainly understand and applaud the goals of increasing housing options within our urban growth areas, reducing wetland buffers to accomplish these goals will be detrimental to both current and future County residents. Despite my fellow environmental scientists and engineers best efforts, the critical functions of flood and water quality protection that wetlands and their buffers provide cannot be easily (or cost-effectively) replaced. The most pressing environmental issues that we are facing in the Puget Sound region involve addressing urban stormwater runoff (including the recent phenomenon of urban runoff mortality in our local streams due to the chemical 6PPD-q in tire wear particles). Now is definitely NOT the time to reduce wetland functions. Alternative housing solutions such as increasing height limits and encouraging accessory dwelling units would provide much more sustainable options. Thanks!

Mike Ehlebracht
Environmental Scientist

Hickey, Lisa

From: CRAIG EVERHART <craig.l.everhart@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2025 1:49 PM
To: Low, Sam
Subject: Please Protect Our Orcas, Salmon and Water and Improve the Critical Areas Regulations



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Council Member,

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Thank you for adopting these recommendations.

Sincerely,
CRAIG EVERHART
5109 153RD PL SW UNIT B
EDMONDS, WA 98026

Hickey, Lisa

From: Jamie Andersen Fields <jamieandersenfields@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2025 4:49 PM
To: Low, Sam
Subject: Please Protect Our Orcas, Salmon and Water and Improve the Critical Areas Regulations



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Council Member,

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Thank you for adopting these recommendations.

Sincerely,
Jamie Andersen Fields
6744 Carolina st
Anacortes, WA 98221

Hickey, Lisa

From: Anna Gilmore <annagilmore1@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2025 10:19 PM
To: Contact Council
Subject: Please reject the proposed amendment to Ordinance 24-097.



CAUTION. This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

Hello,

My name is Anna Gilmore. I am a resident of Snohomish County and I strongly oppose the proposed amendment to Ordinance 24-097.

In a world where orca, salmon, and many other aquatic biota are experiencing long-term population declines and water quality and quantity concerns abound, it is nonsensical that the Council propose to decrease habitat and water quality protections.

Studies by the Department of Ecology and others show that decreasing buffers and wetland quantity will decrease salmon populations, decrease water quality, and increase flooding issues. This proposed amendment directly opposes all of the restoration, surface water management, and salmon recovery work that Washington State -- and Snohomish County -- spends millions on every year. Instead, I call on the Council to increase wetland and stream buffer protection, as these environmental challenges are only worsening with increased development in watersheds and climate change.

Furthermore, the Department of Ecology has shown that mitigation for wetland destruction is not effective without consistent maintenance to get established, something I contend with every day in my work as an ecologist. So, unless Snohomish County PDS has the funding to adaptively maintain and monitor mitigation projects for at least 10 years to ensure that they are actually effective in replacing filled wetlands' ecosystem functions, mitigation will be insufficient to compensate for the loss caused by this amendment.

Finally, according to page 7 of the 2021 Buildable Lands Report for Snohomish County, there is adequate land capacity to accommodate the adopted 2035 housing targets. Therefore, I ask the Council, why are we residents being asked to forgo water quality and salmon population health for the sake of so-called affordable housing efforts when we can maintain both under current regulations?

Until these questions are addressed using the most current science, the Council should reject the proposed amendment and instead focus on what positive environmental change they can contribute to an increasingly-stressed, climate change-stricken environment through amendments that increase riparian and wetland protections. Permanent fences around inadequately sized buffers can keep out lawnmowers, but they sure don't filter out pollutants or soak up surface runoff by themselves.

I implore the Council to reject this amendment.

Thank you for your time.

Anna Gilmore

Hickey, Lisa

From: Mary Ann Kozlovsky <maryannkozz@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2025 12:46 PM
To: Low, Sam
Subject: Please Protect Our Orcas, Salmon and Water and Improve the Critical Areas Regulations



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Council Member,

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Thank you for adopting these recommendations.

Sincerely,
Mary Ann Kozlovsky
23409 13th Pl W
Bothell, WA 98021

Hickey, Lisa

From: Michael Lawson <michaellawson6@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2025 1:46 PM
To: Low, Sam
Subject: Please Protect Our Orcas, Salmon and Water and Improve the Critical Areas Regulations



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Council Member,

After spending several years monitoring water quality of Little Bear Creek, I feel strongly the importance of stream buffers for all of our wildlife and for ourselves. Please do not reduce or eliminate them. Wetlands are so important for filtering and purifying our waters as they go towards the Sound.

I support Futurewise's recommendations to better protect Chinook salmon habitats, orcas, and to improve Snohomish County's Critical Areas Regulations. Please adopt the following recommendations to protect baby orcas and our water quality, wildlife and fish habitats, our water quality and drinking water and to meet requirements of Best Available Science (BAS) and the Growth Management Act (GMA).

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Sincerely,
Michael Lawson
7105 180TH ST SE
Snohomish, WA 98296

Hickey, Lisa

From: Carly Mathews <carlymathews@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 15, 2025 11:09 AM
To: Low, Sam
Subject: Please Protect Our Orcas, Salmon and Water and Improve the Critical Areas Regulations



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Thank you for adopting these recommendations.

Sincerely,
Carly Mathews
35621 Reese Rd
Sultan, WA 98294

Hickey, Lisa

From: Christina Mullee <chalieaj@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2025 4:23 PM
To: Low, Sam
Subject: Please Protect Our Orcas, Salmon and Water and Improve the Critical Areas Regulations



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3. Designate and protect rare plant categories and listings from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Natural Heritage Program, to comply with GMA.
4. Adopt the amendments to better protect development from channel migration zones, which have a high potential to damage buildings and structures.
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6. Update the definition of Critical Areas to include WDFW Priority Habitats and Species and the rare plant categories and listings from DNR's Natural Heritage Program.
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Thank you for adopting these recommendations.

Sincerely,
Christina Mullee
208 E 10th Ave
Ellensburg, WA 98926

Hickey, Lisa

From: Brandy OBray <brandyobray8@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2025 3:57 PM
To: Low, Sam
Subject: Please Protect Our Orcas, Salmon and Water and Improve the Critical Areas Regulations



CAUTION. This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

Council Member,

I support Futurewise's recommendations to better protect Chinook salmon habitats, orcas, and to improve Snohomish County's Critical Areas Regulations. Please adopt the following recommendations to protect baby orcas and our water quality, wildlife and fish habitats, our water quality and drinking water and to meet requirements of Best Available Science (BAS) and the Growth Management Act (GMA).

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Thank you for adopting these recommendations.

Sincerely,
Brandy OBray
8 Port St
Laguna Niguel, CA 92677

Hickey, Lisa

From: j.odell@123mail.org
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2025 8:32 PM
To: Low, Sam
Subject: Oppose amendment to Ordinance 24-097 weakening protections for critical areas



CAUTION. This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

Dear Council Member Low,

I am writing to express opposition to the proposed amendment that would reduce the width of buffers around critical areas to allow development closer to wetlands and streams. "Critical areas" are precisely that, critical, sustaining important populations of insects, birds, fish, and other wildlife.

The science is quite clear that a 200 foot buffer is desirable; the protections offered by lesser buffers are inadequate.

Weakening critical areas protections would be a short-sighted action and contribute to the destruction of many of the benefits of life in Snohomish County.

Please, it is not too late to vote "no" on the proposed amendment to Ordinance 24-097.

Thank you.

Jane O'Dell

Edmonds, WA

Hickey, Lisa

From: America Soler-everhart <americasolereverhart@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2025 2:24 PM
To: Low, Sam
Subject: Please Protect Our Orcas, Salmon and Water and Improve the Critical Areas Regulations



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Council Member,

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Thank you for adopting these recommendations.

Sincerely,
America Soler-everhart
5109 153rd PL SW #B
Edmonds, WA 98026

Hickey, Lisa

From: Sabine Stoecker <sstoecker07@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2025 7:23 PM
To: Low, Sam
Subject: Please Protect Our Orcas, Salmon and Water and Improve the Critical Areas Regulations



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Council Member,

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Thank you for adopting these recommendations.

Sabine Stoecker, property owner on the Pilchuck River in Snohomish County

Sincerely,
Sabine Stoecker
22623 29th PL NE
Granite Falls, WA 98252

Hickey, Lisa

From: Mary Thomason <kathom1000@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2025 3:52 PM
To: Low, Sam
Subject: Please Protect Our Orcas, Salmon and Water and Improve the Critical Areas Regulations



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Council Member,

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Thank you for adopting these recommendations.

Sincerely,
Mary Thomason
4732-176th St. S. W. D2
Lynnwood, WA 98037

Hickey, Lisa

From: Linda Van Citters <lvancitt@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2025 7:57 PM
To: Low, Sam
Subject: Please Protect Our Orcas, Salmon and Water and Improve the Critical Areas Regulations



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Council Member,

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Thank you for adopting these recommendations.

Sincerely,
Linda Van Citters
5416-88th St SW
Mukilteo, WA 98275

Hickey, Lisa

From: Alicia Bradley <abradleystudent@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 15, 2025 10:36 AM
To: Low, Sam
Subject: Please Protect Our Orcas, Salmon and Water and Improve the Critical Areas Regulations



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Council Member,

I support Futurewise's recommendations to better protect Chinook salmon habitats, orcas, and to improve Snohomish County's Critical Areas Regulations. Please adopt the following recommendations to protect baby orcas and our water quality, wildlife and fish habitats, our water quality and drinking water and to meet requirements of Best Available Science (BAS) and the Growth Management Act (GMA).

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Thank you for adopting these recommendations.

Sincerely,
Alicia Bradley
20223 78th Pl NE
Kenmore, WA 98028

Hickey, Lisa

From: Nancy Callan <nancycallan@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2025 11:11 PM
To: Low, Sam
Subject: Please Protect Our Orcas, Salmon and Water and Improve the Critical Areas Regulations



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Council Member,

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Thank you for adopting these recommendations.

Sincerely,
Nancy Callan
22019 4th Ave SE
BOTHELL, WA 98021

Hickey, Lisa

From: Hannah Persyn <hpersyn90@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 15, 2025 10:29 AM
To: Low, Sam
Subject: Please Protect Our Orcas, Salmon and Water and Improve the Critical Areas Regulations



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Council Member,

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Thank you for adopting these recommendations.

Sincerely,
Hannah Persyn
18232 Dubuque Rd
Snohomish, WA 98290

Hickey, Lisa

From: Todd Stuehrenberg <cwestew@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 15, 2025 7:26 PM
To: Low, Sam
Subject: Please Protect Our Orcas, Salmon and Water and Improve the Critical Areas Regulations



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Council Member,

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Thank you for adopting these recommendations.

Sincerely,
Todd Stuehrenberg
4706 217th St SW
Mountlake Terrace, WA 98043

Hickey, Lisa

From: Linda Thompsen <lindathompsen@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 14, 2025 10:36 PM
To: Low, Sam
Subject: Please Protect Our Orcas, Salmon and Water and Improve the Critical Areas Regulations



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Council Member,

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Thank you for adopting these recommendations.

Sincerely,
Linda Thompsen
18425 NE 95th St
Redmond, WA 98052

Hickey, Lisa

From: Cheesman, Darcy
Sent: Wednesday, January 22, 2025 2:08 PM
To: Eco, Debbie
Subject: FW: Please Protect Our Orcas, Salmon and Water and Improve the Critical Areas Regulations

Darcy Cheesman | *Legislative Aide to Councilmember Sam Low*

District 5

3000 Rockefeller Ave., M/S #609 | Everett, WA 98201-4046

O: 425.388.3494 | M: 425.512.1004 | darcy.cheesman@snoco.org

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From: Elizabeth Willians <elyzabeth80@gmail.com>
Sent: Wednesday, January 15, 2025 7:31 PM
To: Low, Sam <Sam.Low@co.snohomish.wa.us>
Subject: Please Protect Our Orcas, Salmon and Water and Improve the Critical Areas Regulations



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Council Member,

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8. Do not delete the current requirement to include on site plans fish and wildlife habitats within the width of the widest potential buffer. This proposed amendment will allow inadvertent damage to fish and wildlife habitats and buffers for buffers wider than 300 feet.
9. Add a requirement to document the applicant's efforts to avoid and minimize impacts to the critical area or buffer. Avoidance is the cheapest and most effective method for protecting critical areas.
10. Do not adopt Amendment 1 or other amendments that allow for narrower buffers or filling wetlands without compensating for their lost functions. Narrower buffers will not protect rivers, streams, and wetlands. Buffer averaging should not result in buffers narrower than 75 percent of the required buffer at any point. Filling wetlands without replacing the lost functions will adversely impact fish and wildlife habitats and other wetland benefits.

Thank you for adopting these recommendations.

Sincerely,
Elizabeth Willians
11404 33rd St Ne
Lake Stevens, WA 98258

Hickey, Lisa

From: Cheesman, Darcy
Sent: Wednesday, January 22, 2025 2:09 PM
To: Contact Council
Subject: FW: Affordable Housing Issue

Darcy Cheesman | *Legislative Aide to Councilmember Sam Low*

District 5

3000 Rockefeller Ave., M/S #609 | Everett, WA 98201-4046

O: 425.388.3494 | M: 425.512.1004 | darcy.cheesman@snoco.org

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From: Morgan Davis
Sent: Thursday, January 16, 2025 8:08 PM
To: Debbie Wetzel ; Countryman, Ryan
Cc: Low, Sam ; Mead, Jared ; Nehring, Nate ; Peterson, Strom ; Dunn, Megan ; Somers, Dave J
Subject: Re: Affordable Housing Issue



CAUTION. This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

Thank you Debbie and Ryan for the 5 year old HART Report and the new goal of planning for housing AFFORDABLE to ALL economic segments (including millionaires wanting multi-million dollar homes).
Nowhere did I see the promotion of private sector RV and Mobile Home Parks, currently an endangered species.
The County finally after years and years of searching for a buyer of its decommissioned 8 acre public works yard in the city of Snohomish, sold to a developer for \$million townhomes, instead of for example, to HASCO for a mobile home park adjacent to the current Snohomish RV and Mobile Home Park at 13th and D, now an endangered species.
Yes, in the old days, low income families lived in trailer parks, while singles lived in SRO's (boarding houses and efficiency apartments like you used to see in downtown Everett). Instead today, we see the County spending \$800,00 a unit at Clare's Place and buying distressed motels to house the homeless. Government can easily alleviate the homelessness situation by giving the homeless folks direct stipends to purchase housing wherever--in RV's, mobile homes, Single Room Occupancy (SRO's), tiny homes, ADU's, or as a roommate in a single family or apartment home.
Let the private sector take care of the wealthy's housing "needs" without incentives like the infamous MFTE.
Building more Cathcart Crossings and Eastview Villages on County surplus land won't solve the homelessness crisis, which should be everyone's top priority to solve.
All the best,
Morgan Davis, concerned citizen.

On Thu, Jan 16, 2025 at 3:49 PM Debbie Wetzel <debbieleewetzel@gmail.com> wrote:

I feel like Ryan's answer to my query proves there is no such thing as affordable housing for privately-owned units.

----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Countryman, Ryan** <Ryan.Countryman@co.snohomish.wa.us>

Date: Thu, Jan 16, 2025 at 3:03 PM

Subject: RE: Affordable Housing Issue

To: Debbie Wetzel <debbieleewetzel@gmail.com>

Hi Debbie,

Definitions for affordable housing, low income, and affordability vary depending on context. There was a big change in 2021 when the Legislature passed House Bill 1220 ([link to HB 1220](#)), revising the housing goal in the Growth Management Act and making other changes related to housing. Prior to HB 1220 we had to “*encourage* the availability of affordable housing to all economic segments”. Now the requirement is to “*plan for and accommodate* housing affordable to all economic segments”. These are very different standards. HB 1220 also increased the income ranges that we are required to plan for. Previously, most planning was for groups in the 30, 60, and 80% of area median income brackets. Now we are required to plan for the needs of people making up to 120% of area median incomes.

The attachment is a report that predates HB 1220. Although dated, this still provides good context on housing and policy. Rents and home prices have been rising faster than incomes for a long time and this has only gotten worse since the report was published. You will also note that the report calls itself an action plan, but very few of its recommendations have been implemented.

Regarding permits: Developers do not typically need to say that their project is going to be affordable on their permit application. There is almost never an advantage for them in doing so. Although [SCC 30.76](#) purports to give priority process for low-income housing, it would take an applicant a huge amount of work to show that they qualify. So much so, that I am not aware of any projects where the applicant bothered even trying. What I can say is that some of the larger apartment builders receive financing subsidies from the state if their development is going to be affordable to people making 80% (or sometimes 60%) of area median income. These state level programs are why, beginning around 2010-15, we started seeing apartment complexes with some 4- and 5-bedroom units. These larger units compete with single-family rentals and were part of making the apartment projects meet state financing requirements. Apart from a handful of condos when condos were still being built, there are no 4- or 5-bedroom units in the county built between WWII and the early 2010s. The point being that it is important to understand limitations on the data. PDS permit records do not show affordable units, but they also don't need to.

I would be happy to talk about affordability and critical areas. Friday morning and afternoon look open for a call (11 to about 2:30 not so much). Sometimes it is easier to talk and then follow up with documentation than it is to write a long series of back-and-forth emails.

Best,

Ryan Countryman, Sr. Legislative Analyst

Snohomish County Council

3000 Rockefeller Ave., M/S 609 | Everett, WA 98201-4046

425-309-6164 | ryan.countryman@snoco.org

From: Debbie Wetzel <debbieleewetzel@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 16, 2025 9:34 AM
To: Countryman, Ryan <Ryan.Countryman@co.snohomish.wa.us>
Subject: Affordable Housing Issue



CAUTION. This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

Good morning -

Please address this issue that I brought up during public comments on January 15, 2025:

RCW 43.185A.010.1 defines affordable housing as residential housing for rental occupancy, not private home ownership. For reference, there have been thousands of development applications submitted and issued in the last 18+ years, so 99.9% of development applications within Snohomish County are not “affordable housing” or “low-income housing.” Do not confuse this with Snohomish County Code 4.46.010)(1) referencing RCW 43.63A.510, which addresses state-owned land affordable housing, not private land.

Please provide me with the statutes and codes PDS is using to claim private development is providing affordable housing. I want facts, not persuasive argument.

Thanks.

--

I remain,

Deborah Wetzel
206-261-0941

--

I remain,
Deborah Wetzel
206-261-0941

Hickey, Lisa

From: bill liderengineering.com <bill@liderengineering.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 16, 2025 2:50 PM
To: Debbie Wetzel; Low, Sam; Nehring, Nate; Mead, Jared; Peterson, Strom; Dunn, Megan; Eco, Debbie
Cc: Todd Gray; Streamkeeper, Tom; DOUG GRESHAM; kara.whittaker@dfw.wa.gov; Kristin Kelly; Joan Thomas; Mickie Gundersen; eliza.aronson@heraldnet.com; Michael Whitney
Subject: RE: Ordinance 24-097 & Amendment 1 -- Continuation of Hearing/Remand Back to Planning and Community Development Committee PUBLIC NOTICE



CAUTION. This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

The Ord. 24-097 hearing yesterday was a *trainwreck!*

I warned the Council over a month ago not to proceed with this half-baked, last minute, code amendment that would weaken wetland protections; but, the Council decided to go full speed ahead on approval, hoping that the public would not find out about this developer promulgated code change, until it was too late. Now Ord. 24-097 is a wreck on a wreck, that Council wasted 3-hours of everyone's time yesterday, that will now have to be repeated all over again. Things you should do differently next time:

- Everyone who testified or submitted comments on Ord. 24-097 should receive updates of all documents produced and notification of any committee meetings, legislative actions, or future hearings.
- Future PDS staff documents should be circulated to all parties who provided comments at least **30-days** prior to any hearing to allow adequate time for review and discussion. Any code changes should be in final form, without last minute amendments or revisions.
- Schedule hearings at time when all Councilmembers will be present, the full duration of the hearing. It was extremely rude of some Councilmembers to walk out in the middle of our testimony, in essence giving your constituents the middle finger.
- Public experts should be allowed more time than 3-minutes to refute the one-sided, pro-development PDS presentation provided by Ryan Countryman.
- All of PDS engineers have quit or otherwise left PDS because of harassment to approve projects that they know do not meet code, under Mike McCrary's toxic workplace. PDS engineers are forced to decide if they should do what is ethically required under their professional engineer's license, or approve projects that they know will be harmful to environment and downstream properties under threat of losing their jobs. The Council should retain an independent engineering firm to review all work coming out of PDS.
- Any future ordinance should be clearly written with no ambiguity or amendments.
- Protect small wetlands and all wetland buffers and eliminate buffer width averaging altogether.
- Wetland buffers that were destroyed by previous development must be restored full width as a condition for any redevelopment or new development.
- Councilmembers who are ignorant of wetland issues should attend the training session offered by Tom Murdock and the NW Stream Center, especially Jared Mead.
- Any modification to the Wetland Code should be required to protect WDFW designated [Priority Habitat Species \(PHS\)](#) areas as allowed under the Growth Management Act. PHS information is used primarily by cities and counties to implement and update land use plans and development

regulations under the Growth Management Act. All land disturbing activities should be prohibited in PHS areas in Snohomish County.

William Lider, PE, CESCL
LIDER ENGINEERING, PLLC
2526 – 205th Place SW
Lynnwood, WA 98036
425-776-0671 Office
206-661-0787 Cell

From: Debbie Wetzel

Sent: Thursday, January 16, 2025 11:59 AM

To: sam.low@snoco.org; Nehring, Nate ; jared.mead@snoco.org; strom.peterson@snoco.org; megan.dunn@snoco.org; Eco, Debbie

Cc: Todd Gray ; Tom Murdoch ; DOUG GRESHAM ; kara.whittaker@dfw.wa.gov; Kristin Kelly ; bill liderengineering.com ; Joan Thomas ; Mickie Gundersen ; eliza.aronson@heraldnet.com; Michael Whitney

Subject: Ordinance 24-097 & Amendment 1 -- Continuation of Hearing/Remand Back to Planning and Community Development Committee PUBLIC NOTICE

I have concerns about providing the public with notice for the continued hearing on this matter. The general public does not get notice of when the Planning and Community Development Committee meets, and they should not be expected to look up the Council Agendas (and review them) to find the new public hearing date, both for the underlying Planning and Community Development Committee meeting and/or GLS and the Council public hearing that will follow. While you might say you will publish in The Everett Herald, the public should not be required to subscribe to the paper to get notice. At the very least, you must send an email to everyone who submitted emails on this issue so they have adequate notice. This must be done for transparency.

--

I remain,
Deborah Wetzel
206-261-0941

Hickey, Lisa

From: Cheesman, Darcy
Sent: Wednesday, January 22, 2025 2:07 PM
To: Eco, Debbie
Subject: FW: Please Protect Our Orcas, Salmon and Water and Improve the Critical Areas Regulations

Darcy Cheesman | *Legislative Aide to Councilmember Sam Low*

District 5

3000 Rockefeller Ave., M/S #609 | Everett, WA 98201-4046

O: 425.388.3494 | M: 425.512.1004 | darcy.cheesman@snoco.org

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From: Cherie Chapman <cheriechapman1990@gmail.com>
Sent: Friday, January 17, 2025 10:47 AM
To: Low, Sam <Sam.Low@co.snohomish.wa.us>
Subject: Please Protect Our Orcas, Salmon and Water and Improve the Critical Areas Regulations



CAUTION. This email originated from outside of this organization. Please exercise caution with links and attachments.

Council Member,

I support Futurewise's recommendations to better protect Chinook salmon habitats, orcas, and to improve Snohomish County's Critical Areas Regulations. Please adopt the following recommendations to protect baby orcas and our water quality, wildlife and fish habitats, our water quality and drinking water and to meet requirements of Best Available Science (BAS) and the Growth Management Act (GMA).

1. Adopt 200-foot buffers on streams, rivers and shorelines that are home to salmon and other fish species and 100-foot buffers on other streams and shorelines measured from the channel migration zone edge or active floodplain to protect against more declines in salmon stocks and to reduce deaths among southern resident orcas.
2. Designate WDFW priority habitats and species as fish and wildlife conservation areas and base the protection of these habitats and species on the WDFW Management Recommendations, which is required to comply with the GMA.
3. Designate and protect rare plant categories and listings from the Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Natural Heritage Program, to comply with GMA.
4. Adopt the amendments to better protect development from channel migration zones, which have a high potential to damage buildings and structures.

5. Adopt the amendments to protect ground water from water pollution to protect our drinking water sources.
6. Update the definition of Critical Areas to include WDFW Priority Habitats and Species and the rare plant categories and listings from DNR's Natural Heritage Program.
7. Require a site plan for all activities that can adversely impact wetlands and fish and wildlife habitat conservations areas; activities such as draining wetlands can harm both wetlands and fish and wildlife habitats.
8. Do not delete the current requirement to include on site plans fish and wildlife habitats within the width of the widest potential buffer. This proposed amendment will allow inadvertent damage to fish and wildlife habitats and buffers for buffers wider than 300 feet.
9. Add a requirement to document the applicant's efforts to avoid and minimize impacts to the critical area or buffer. Avoidance is the cheapest and most effective method for protecting critical areas.
10. Do not adopt Amendment 1 or other amendments that allow for narrower buffers or filling wetlands without compensating for their lost functions. Narrower buffers will not protect rivers, streams, and wetlands. Buffer averaging should not result in buffers narrower than 75 percent of the required buffer at any point. Filling wetlands without replacing the lost functions will adversely impact fish and wildlife habitats and other wetland benefits.

Thank you for adopting these recommendations.

Sincerely,
Cherie Chapman
18810 28th Dr Se
Bothell, WA 98013

Hickey, Lisa

From: Cheesman, Darcy
Sent: Wednesday, January 22, 2025 2:08 PM
To: Eco, Debbie
Subject: FW: Preserve buffer zones

Darcy Cheesman | Legislative Aide to Councilmember Sam Low

District 5

3000 Rockefeller Ave., M/S #609 | Everett, WA 98201-4046

O: 425.388.3494 | M: 425.512.1004 | darcy.cheesman@snoco.org

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From: Michael Leonard <mileona@yahoo.com>
Sent: Friday, January 17, 2025 7:00 AM
To: Low, Sam <Sam.Low@co.snohomish.wa.us>
Subject: Preserve buffer zones



Caution. Suspicious Link: Sender email and link don't match up. This may be a phishing attempt.

We need housing, yes, but please err on the side of preserving our natural environment. Once the natural buffer zones are gone, they cannot be put back. My instinct says to build up not out. What Kirkland has done at Totem Lake is a great example. On the same land footprint, they have built a huge amount of housing with retail under to make a vibrant new neighborhood. And the wetland / walking trails integrated nearby refreshes the soul and the wildlife. How are you balancing your state and county responsibilities?

Follow the link below to view the article.

Snohomish County delays vote on habitat ordinance

https://gcc02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=https%3A%2F%2Fheraldnet-wa.newsmemory.com%2F%3Fpublink%3D1b07ca789_134f829&data=05%7C02%7CSam.Low%40co.snohomish.wa.us%7C22bfafe93d6c4d47a68b08dd3707a1ff%7C6bd456aabc074218897c4d0a6a503ee2%7C0%7C0%7C638727228130676367%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJFbXB0eU1hcGkiOnRydWUsIlYiOiIwLjAuMDAwMCIsIlAiOiJXaW4zMmIsIkFOIjoiTWFpbCIiLdUIjoyfQ%3D%3D%7C4000%7C%7C%7C&sdata=yBkhS9o%2FISsXcvyjyELDxLr4I2vGhqfmDptf8GtvxDo%3D&reserved=0

Sent from my iPhone

Hickey, Lisa

From: Toni Reading <toni.reading@gmail.com>
Sent: Saturday, January 25, 2025 4:58 AM
To: Contact Council
Subject: Critical Areas Regulations Update

Councilmembers,

I stand in opposition to the Mead/Nehring proposed amendment to the Critical Areas Regulations Update.

Sincerely,

Toniann Reading

Sultan, Wa

Hickey, Lisa

From: Larry East <lapaeast@gmail.com>
Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 10:45 AM
To: Contact Council
Subject: Wetlands story

Please keep the buffer zone for our wetlands. We need salmon. We, humans eat salmon. So do the Orca whales. What good are they? Tell me. In every instance of a food source between humans and a whale, we should eliminate our competition for salmon. Let the whales go elsewhere. We can't feed our people on them. We need our wetlands for salmon. For us, humans. Thank you, Lawrence East in Everett.

Hickey, Lisa

From: CHERYL & MATT PERHATCH <mperhatch@comcast.net>
Sent: Tuesday, January 28, 2025 10:01 AM
To: Contact Council
Subject: Wetlands

County Council,

I have wet lands on my property and do my neighbors. You have changed the zoning in my neighborhood for multi unit housing. Now you are willing to destroy the wetlands as well. We have salmon fry, deer, and bear. Once you take away these wetlands, where are these animals supposed to go? Do you even care. Is it just about the extra money you will be gaining? I have attended many meetings as have lots of my neighbors. We are trying to save our neighborhood and it seems to me that you are out to destroy it. Please don't allow the wetlands policy change. Keep our green space and the wetlands safe for all.

Cheryl Perhatch
425-931-8197

Hickey, Lisa

From: Helen Gabel <helengabel@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, January 30, 2025 8:05 PM
To: Contact Council
Subject: Wetlands AND affordable housing

In regards the updating of Critical Area Regulations (Ordinance 24-097):

I can appreciate the need for more affordable housing. I would feel more sympathetic to the recently proposed amendments if what I actually saw were attempts to build affordable units. However, what I observe are only acres and acres of single-family mega-homes. This is especially true in the more rural areas where wetlands have not yet been built over.

Also, saying that the amendments would not reduce protections currently in place is not reassuring. A few years ago a housing development was proposed next to my own community. The wetland study submitted by the developer stated that no amphibious life could be found. Even though we submitted a recording of the frogs singing in that wetland the night before our hearing, the wetland “protections” allowed the development to go forward without modification. Guess what—the wetland “study” predicted the outcome. There are no frogs singing there any more.

Therefore, I continue to support maximum protection for our remaining wetlands, as well as ordinances that would encourage affordable units where wetlands are not impacted.

Please inform me when the next hearing on this issue is scheduled.

Thank you again for your careful consideration of the issues,

Helen Gabel
22405 39th Ave SE
Bothell, WA 98021

Hickey, Lisa

From: tnmatlack@comcast.net
Sent: Saturday, February 1, 2025 10:38 AM
To: Contact Council
Subject: Critical Area Ordinance Update: Letter for the Public Record/Continued Hearing
Attachments: Critical Area Update Winter 2025.docx; Lake Bosworth North.docx

County Council Members and Staff,

As we wait for further findings on CAO, please review the two Word documents and how recent RCS projects maxed out your rural growth targets and abused the old Critical Area Ordinance which you now have the power to improve upon.

Thanks,

**Tom Matlack
2504 112th Dr. NE
Lake Stevens, WA 98258
425-334-7713
tnmatlack@comcast.net**

Letter for Public Record; Continued Public Hearing

Critical Area Update Winter 2025: Remanded back to committee

Feb. 2, 2025

Action: Please follow guidelines and advice of public hearing environmental experts....WDFW, Steam Keepers, etc... based on most recent Best Available Science.

County Council Members:

As you wait for PDS further findings on behalf of CC Mead's request, please reflect a minute on two things: 1. Your commitment to PSRC/SCT policies and regulations and your own Comprehensive Plan and **Rural Growth Targets 2) Your approval of Rural Cluster Subdivision Ordinance 24-021 which allows for tighter clusters, screenings, and set-backs, etc in RCS design.**

To review: As the ink dried on your RCS amended ordinance, two giant projects applied, and were approved/vested under the **new RCS regs and **old CAO** regs: Bosworth North(203 units) and Woodland Heights(250 units), both outside the Granite Falls UGA.**

Woodland Heights is stalled due to a 2nd access road, but Bosworth North, owned by a very well-known Lake Stevens developer, is well under way. Thanks to the new design regs in your RCS ordinance, and the old CAO, 203 units are tucked in amongst **102 wetlands and 8 streams, mostly Type F fish/salmon bearing. **15 of those pesky wetlands must be filled** and banked to achieve maximum number of units. (See attached plat map from PDS On-Line Permit)**

Summary: your new amended RCS ordinance INCENTIVIZED huge rural projects amongst the most vulnerable resource lands, just as the planning commission warned 3 years ago when RCS amendments were 1st proposed(and rejected). Furthermore, you ignored your own staff warnings on rural growth:

There has been an uptick in new RCS activity since the PDS presentation on August 15, 2023. This includes two notable examples that have not yet reached the full application stage counting towards the 29-lots per year that PDS projected in August 2023. These are: • Lake Bosworth North, a 200-lot RCS with a traffic pre-submittal request submitted on November 12, 2023, (PDS

file 23-117159 PS); and • Woodland Heights Reserve, a 250-lot RCS with a pre-application request submitted on December 13, 2023 (PDS file 23-119379 PA). These examples are early indicators that RCS development may soon return as a major contributor to rural growth. If RCS development picks up as suggested by recent permit activity, it is not clear how Snohomish County **will reduce rural growth to a level consistent with the adopted targets**. Meeting the targets will become more challenging if adoption of Ord 24-021 encourages further RCS development above the apparent new trend levels.

So, these two giant RCS cannot be stopped; your ordinance guaranteed that. But now you have a chance to protect critical areas in other rural resource areas. I see this CAO update a chance to “make up” for the give aways in new RCS design regs. Put the growth near transit; near jobs; near services, not conveniently tucked into every pocket next to streams and wetlands.

Please follow the experts that offered Best Available Science for buffer widths for streams and wetlands, classification standards, and rationales for degradation.

Thanks,

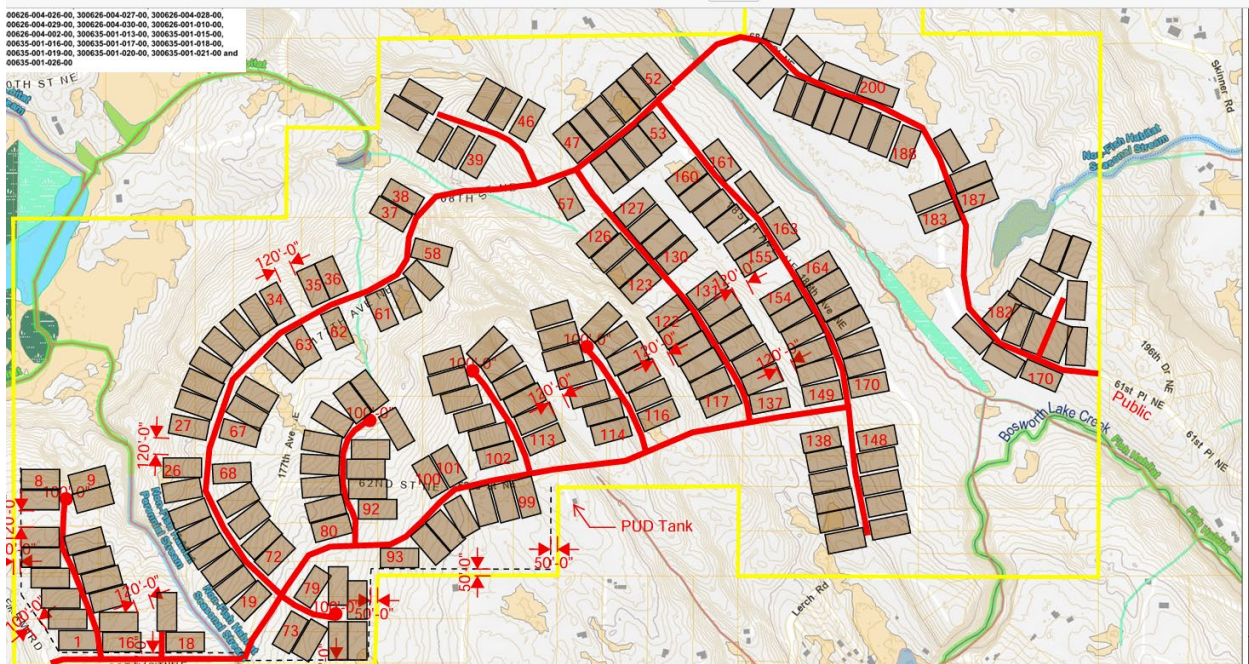
Tom Matlack

2504 112th Dr. NE; Lake Stevens, WA 98258 425-334-7713

tnmatlack@comcast.net

Appendix: Plat map aerial of Lake Bosworth, North. Prelim approved new RCS and vested old CAO. Grrrr.

- Lake Bosworth North, a 200-lot RCS with a traffic pre-submittal request submitted on November 12, 2023, (PDS file 23-117159 PS); and
- Woodland Heights Reserve, a 250-lot RCS with a pre-application request submitted on December 13, 2023 (PDS file 23-119379 PA).



Lake Bosworth North, LLC. Land Pro Lake Stevens

This is how Snohomish County Council envisions “rural character” and resource land protections?

Hickey, Lisa

From: ken crossman <ken_crossman@msn.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 2, 2025 10:55 AM
To: Contact Council
Subject: Ordinance 24-097 Proposed Amendment 1
Attachments: ordinance 24-097.docx

Ordinance 24-097 (Proposed Amendment 1)

February 1, 2025

Dear Council Members,

Wetland buffers effectively mitigate upstream runoff by absorbing excess hydrology by acting like a sponge to help regulate the rate and volume of downstream discharge into the wetland. Vegetation impedes the flow of runoff and allows water to percolate into the ground. Surface flow is then turned into subsurface or groundwater flow over an extended period of time, resulting in stable, natural ecosystems. By intercepting intense rainfall, vegetation preserves soil composition so that infiltration is not impaired. Vegetation also produces litter which increases the humus content of the soil and increases adsorption and infiltration.

Water budget studies of wet coniferous forests in western Washington indicate that approximately 50 percent of the annual rainfall is intercepted by foliage and evaporated during the rainy season. (2012 LID Technical Guidance Manual for Puget Sound). Snohomish County soils have been classified as a soil with glacial till at 20 to 40 inches with a perched water table on top of the till for approximately 60 percent of the soils (professional experience/NRCS). These soils play a critical role in the storage and conveyance of rainfall. These soils typically have a surface layer high in organic content. Undisturbed soil structure typically has 20 to 30 percent of active water storage by volume. For most storm events, the gentle rainfall intensities are less than the combined capacity of the interception loss, and vegetation and soil storage in native forests and overland flow does not occur or is minimal (Booth, Hartley and Jackson, 2002). The storm event typically infiltrates into the underlying soil and flows slowly as subsurface flow. Macropores in the soil promote the movement of air and percolating water. (The Nature and Properties of Soils, 8th Addition, Nyle C Brady). The volume of stormwater surface runoff is minimal.

Typical residential and commercial development practice in the region removes most, if not all, vegetation and topsoil and replaces with pavement, structures, streets, and compost amended soil which has a compromised soil structure when compared to native undisturbed soils. While the developed urban area soils are estimated to have ninety percent less stormwater storage than native forested condition, amended soils only recover approximately twenty five percent of the storage capacity (May et al., 1997). The volume of storm water that is not intercepted by vegetation or infiltrated into subsurface soils increases substantially during development and results in an increase in surface discharge. This increase in volume over predeveloped conditions may be discharged to a wetland or a stream leading to a wetland depending on situational topography.

The 2021 Snohomish County Drainage Manual currently regulates storm water volume discharges to wetlands via Minimum Requirement 8 when flow control is required. This requirement applies to threshold discharge areas that discharge directly or indirectly through a conveyance system. The purpose is to protect the wetland's functions and values by maintaining the wetland's hydroperiod. This is accomplished by maintaining the fluctuations in water depth and timing of discharge. An increase in stormwater volume due to development will influence this relationship. The definition of conveyance system is as follows: A system of drainage facilities, natural or artificial which collects, contains and conducts the flow of storm water runoff. The elements of a natural conveyance system include, but are not limited to, swales, wetlands, drainage courses, streams, and rivers. The elements of an artificial conveyance system include, but are not limited to, gutters, ditches, pipes, constructed open channels and detention facilities. Discharge out of one of these conveyance systems directly or indirectly (example would be discharge to a catch basin in the street that leads to a downstream wetland) would trigger minimum requirement 8 analysis for those projects requiring flow control (example would be new impervious surface greater than 10,000 square feet). Discharge out of a pipe to a rock pad at the edges of the buffer of a wetland would typically be a concentrated flow which would result in surface flow to the wetland and would trigger MR8. A level spreader trench is basically a level 50-foot-long trench with gravel to the ground surface which disperses the runoff over a large area and promotes infiltration downslope. A level spreader in many circumstances would not lead to a concentrated flow to the wetland depending on the length, slope, vegetation, and soil condition with the buffer. The allowed discharge out of a level spreader is 0.5 cubic feet per second which equates to 223 gallons per minute or manually dumping four 55-gallon drums every minute over the length of the trench.

This leads to the purpose of writing this paper in that many times a development finds it necessary to discharge stormwater to the ground surface downslope where no conveyance system exists and when typical soils preclude the full infiltration of storm water due to limited depth to hardpan or seasonal high-water table. Often times a wetland exists downslope. Per the Washington State Department of Ecology Wetland Mitigation in Washington State Part 1: Agency Policies and Guidance (April 2021) Chapter 8, Stormwater and Wetlands states that flow-controlled, treated stormwater discharged into wetland buffers is not expected to result in a wetland impact. Also, outflow from the stormwater facility or project site should be diffused (level spreader) prior to discharge into the buffer. The wetland protection levels under Snohomish County Code Minimum Requirement 8 also states discharge from a BMP or project site should be dispersed using a method to diffuse the flow before entering the wetland buffer. Diffusion of the flow into the wetland buffer assists in mitigating this extra volume of stormwater caused by development by promoting infiltration within the buffer. The mitigation is successful depending on the physical length of the buffer, slope of the buffer, condition of the soil, and the amount of vegetation.

The statement in the Ecology Guidance Manual (2021) that flow-controlled, treated stormwater discharge into wetland buffers is not expected to result in a wetland impact is based on discharging to a standard vegetated buffer in my opinion. Discharge to a substandard or reduced buffer may result in unintended impacts to the wetland hydroperiod. There is no link between buffer reduction and Ecology's

2021 Interagency Wetland Mitigation Guidance recommendations for agencies for discharge to a wetland buffer. Altered vegetation or compacted soils within a buffer also has an impact on the hydrology to the wetland. I know of examples of failed attempts to disperse runoff as a result of these alterations.

Snohomish County Drainage Manual (2021 Vol 5) BMP 5:30 (Full Dispersion) requires a 100-foot flow path thru native vegetation along with preservation of a tract of native vegetation to simulate allowing 10 percent effective impervious to be dispersed with no significant impact on stream hydrology. The mitigation for infiltrating the increased volume and peak runoff is based on dispersion and infiltration within the native vegetation. In this case, BMP 5:30 is the sole flow control method and stormwater is assumed to fully infiltrate. This may not be a direct comparison but is useful to conceptualize the concept.

Until such time as there are further studies on the required buffer widths and conditions to mitigate stormwater impacts with regards to volume increases, I would suggest that discharge of stormwater into wetland buffers be avoided in non-standard buffers and discharge into standard buffers be required to be fully vegetated either naturally or thru buffer enhancement. Should the standard buffer exceed 100 feet it may be appropriate to allow dispersion of runoff in a reduced vegetated buffer of at least 100 feet. If this becomes an issue, stormwater can be pumped to an appropriate location as pumping is becoming more common. Another solution might be to require a critical area study to address hydrologic impacts to the hydroperiod if discharges are not to a standard buffer. In this case, if the discharge to the wetland ends up being in a surface discharge form, the project would be subject to Minimum Requirement 8.

Sincerely,

Ken W. Crossman P.E.