



City of Sedro-Woolley
Grant No. G1100233

City of Sedro-Woolley Shoreline Management Program Update



**Strategy for Shoreline Uses, Public Access,
Resource Protection and Restoration
Draft September 2011**

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Task 3.1 Community Visioning

The City of Sedro-Woolley is currently engaged in a comprehensive update of its Shoreline Master Program (SMP) in compliance with the state Shoreline Management Act (SMA; RCW 90.58) and implementing guidelines (WAC 173-26). The purpose of this strategy for development of the SMP update is by identifying overarching policy goals for shoreline uses, public access, resource protection and restoration.

Under the SMA, each city and county with shorelines of the state must prepare and adopt a Shoreline Master Program (SMP). The City of Sedro-Woolley has shoreline jurisdictional lands within its corporate limits. The city must involve the public as much as possible in the SMP development process. To meet this end, the city has developed a Public Participation Plan which lays out the projected timeline for the public participation process. The community visioning process is informed by the City's Shoreline Characterization and Analysis report drafted in June 2011.

The City of Sedro-Woolley began its visioning process in August of 2011. The visioning process was officially kicked off with an open public hearing conducted by the Shoreline update Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC). The visioning process is ongoing, but after the initial meeting and after having the public comment period open for a month, the following strategies for shoreline uses, public access, resource protection and restoration (herein "Strategies") have been proposed in accordance with Task 3.1 of the SMA Grant Agreement with the Department of Ecology (Agreement). The Strategies, as well as the Shoreline Characterization and Analysis report, public comments and other feedback from various state and non-governmental agencies will further inform the remaining elements of Task 3 of the Agreement. This is a Draft Document subject to continued public input.

Strategies for Shoreline Uses, Public Access, Resource Protection and Restoration

Outreach and public participation – The City of Sedro-Woolley has developed an outreach strategy to gather input on the city’s shoreline uses, goals for future shoreline uses as well as policies and regulations for uses and activities in the shoreline jurisdiction. The city has elected to employ the following outreach methods:

- Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) - The CAC will be comprised of the City’s Planning Commission members and will perform its work at the regularly scheduled Planning Commission meeting times (Third Tuesday of the month at 6:30 PM). Additional meetings may be scheduled as necessary; any such meetings will be publicly noticed as other SMP update public meetings and hearings. The CAC will discuss shoreline management policy issues, set goals, review technical work, proposes regulations, and promote communication with the public on shoreline management issues.
- Formal Hearings – Public hearings will be held to accept public input in a formal setting. Staff will update the attendees on the latest SMP update progress, providing written and visual aids as necessary. After the staff presentation the hearing will be opened to receive public input for the record. Most hearings will take place at regularly scheduled Planning Commission meetings as the Planning Commission is the usual forum used by the City of Sedro-Woolley to discuss and review land use policy. The Planning Commission also serves as the CAC to the SMP update process. In the interest of offering a variety of times for interested participants and help keep the City’s elected officials abreast of the ongoing SPM update, the City Council, which holds regular meets at 7PM on the second and fourth Wednesday of the month, will also hold at least one public hearing.
- Informal Events – Not all interested parties are available for evening meetings and/or are uncomfortable with the formal hearing process. For these reasons, less formal events will be available. Public meetings, workshops, open houses and worksessions provide the participants an opportunity to speak with staff and City officials in a less structured setting, while still allowing their input to be heard. At least one meeting will be held at an evening City Council worksession, which is a monthly (first Wednesday at 7PM) round-table meeting.
- Public notifications – The City of Sedro-Woolley uses the Skagit Valley Herald – the City’s newspaper of record – to publish notices and hearings. In addition, notice of formal and informal events will be placed on the City’s website and posted in City Hall.
- Website – Notices and other SMP update products and information will be available for review on the City’s website.

- Mailing – The City will maintain a list of interested parties and notices of comment periods, public hearing or open houses could be sent to parties on that mailing list. Mailings offer another avenue to keep the public informed throughout the update process.
- Email – Electronic communication may be used as an alternate method of communication or in addition o mailings for those who prefer email.

Provide public access to lands in shoreline jurisdiction – With the exception of less than an acre of private property, the land within the City of Sedro-Woolley’s shoreline jurisdiction is either publicly owned or dedicated for public use¹. Because the City owns the lion’s share of the shoreline jurisdiction and maintains the area for public recreation, public access is a priority and will continue to be a priority. Zoning reflects this public access priority.

Recreational amenities in the publicly owned areas will remain and additional shoreline-appropriate recreational amenities will be explored.

Enhancement – Portions of the shoreline jurisdiction – over 200 feet from the main stem of the Skagit River and on the opposite side of an existing road – have significant amounts of invasive vegetation. Future city and public service group projects may be used to reclaim appropriate areas for public use and or vegetative enhancement for habitat services.

Areas of native vegetation are present at the southwestern portion of the shoreline jurisdiction. Occasional flooding and loose, sandy soils complicate enhancement opportunities in this area. Maintaining and managing the existing native vegetation in the area is a priority.

River Access – The bank along the main stem of the Skagit River is steep and affords little safe access to swift moving river. Management of the bank (for slope stabilization) while maintaining visual access to the scenic river stretch is an important aspect of the shoreline Strategy.

Continuing use of the existing boat launch shall remain a priority under the Strategy. Some unmanaged trails through the native vegetation areas on the western reach of the shoreline jurisdiction provide limited river access. Development of access to the river in this area is not encouraged because of the safety issues associated with the swift moving river.

¹ The privately owned property in the shoreline jurisdiction is all down a natural embankment from the developable portion of the properties. Those developable portions already have residential units on them, and further development is unlikely.