

# Washington's Shoreline Management Act (SMA) and the Comprehensive Update process



Lewis County  
Planning Commission  
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# Presentation goals

- Provide background on the Act and the comprehensive update process
- Offer an overview of the state's role
- Discuss shoreline master programs (SMPs)
- Answer your questions

# Shoreline Management Act (SMA)

Passed in 1971; voters approved in 1972.

Three focal policies:

1. **Protect environmental resources of state shorelines;**
2. **Public access and enjoyment opportunities; and**
3. **Priority to uses that require a shoreline location.**

# Differences between the SMA and GMA (Growth Management Act)

- GMA -- requires the fastest growing counties in the state, and their cities, to formulate plans that align with 14 state goals
  - Founded on a local communities' values and objectives.
  - Presumed valid when approved by locals
- SMA -- applies to cities and counties having "Shorelines of the State"
  - Includes Critical Areas within the Shoreline jurisdiction
  - Balances statewide and local interests
  - Approved by local government *and* Ecology

# Local-State Partnership

- **Local governments – lead shoreline planning within your jurisdictional boundary.**
- **Local governments – prepare, adopt, oversee and enforce your locally-crafted shoreline master program.**
- **Local governments – update and keep your program current.**

# Local-State Partnership

- **Ecology – Provides state “Guidelines”.**
- **Ecology – Provides financial support and technical assistance.**
- **Ecology – Department Director must approve each local master program before it can take effect.**

# Local-State Partnership

Once an updated shoreline master program is approved by local government and Ecology, *the state will be a full partner in defending your revised program.*



# SMA Guidelines

- **Negotiated settlement in 2003.**
- **Sets minimum standards for local governments updating their programs.**
- **Used by Ecology & State Hearings Boards.**
- **“Bookends”**

# SMA Guidelines

## New Key Standards:

- **“No Net Loss” of ecological functions**
- **Restoration Planning**
- **Assessment of “reasonably foreseeable” cumulative impacts**

# Three-year SMP update includes:

- Citizen involvement
- Inventory and use analysis of your shorelines
- Shoreline goals, policies and environment designations
- Shoreline regulations and standards
- Permit administration and enforcement provisions
- Local adoption through open public process
- Ecology review and approval

# An SMP update will:

- Allow communities to realize their vision for waterfront areas
- Allow for appropriate and strategic development to occur
- Preserve shoreline areas for future generations
- Maintain and encourage public access



# An SMP update will:

- Respect private property rights and provide predictability to the development community
- Integrate other plans that address shoreline issues (Growth Management, flood management plans, critical areas ordinances, etc.)
- Protect property from erosion along streams and beaches and allow this process where it is natural
- Safeguard fish and wildlife habitat and seek to improve water quality
- Allow enhancement of the local economy while encouraging water dependent uses

# An SMP update will not:

- Take away existing private property rights
- Require existing shoreline homes to be relocated or removed
- Require existing uses or activities to be discontinued
- Apply retroactively: the starting point or baseline is where you are today



# Ecology resources

- Guidance materials
- Data and information
- Workshops and training
- Staff assistance
- Funding
- Web Site

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**Web site:**

**<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/shorelines/index.html>**