

SMP FACT SHEET #4

What is a Shoreline Master Program?

Shorelines Defined:

Shorelines are protected by the WA State Shoreline Management Act and include:

- Marine waters, lakes larger than 20 acres, streams with a flow of more than 20 cubic feet per second (CFS), and the shorelands associated with these waterbodies.

Updating an SMP:

- All 260 local governments in Washington State are required to regularly review and make updates (as needed) to the policies and protections in their Shoreline Master Program (SMP).

Primary Goals of an SMP:

- To ensure Washington State shorelines remain safe and unpolluted, are developed and managed fairly, and remain available for use by our children and future generations.
- The 3 main policy goals of the SMA: shoreline use, environmental protection, and public access.

Activities Regulated by an SMP:

- New development and industrial use along shorelines.
- Expansion and repair of existing structures along shorelines.
- New and replacement bulkheads and docks.
- Aquaculture operations.
- State mandated *no net loss* of shoreline ecological functions.
- Public access requirements.

SMP Update Process:

- In 2003, the WA State Dept. of Ecology (Ecology) revised its legally-binding guidelines on the required elements of a local shoreline master program.
- Each program must be reviewed every seven years to ensure compliance.
- Thurston County held an open house and other public meetings for the SMP update, and the Planning Commission completed review of the draft SMP.
- The Planning Commission held a public hearing and made a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners (Board). The Board will hold its own hearing before adopting the SMP.
- The updated SMP must be approved by Ecology before it becomes final and takes effect, becoming part of the statewide shoreline master program.



Shoreline Master Program (SMP)

***NOT YET ADOPTED - OPEN FOR PUBLIC COMMENT.**

ASK STAFF

Thurston County's SMP covers most shoreline building projects.

Contact Us about your site and which permits may still be required.

READ THE CODE

Title 19

TC Current Shoreline Codes

FIND IT ONLINE

Shoreline Master Program Webpage



Benefits of an SMP:

Shoreline Master Programs contribute to local and statewide economic vitality by:

- Protecting lives and property by keeping development out of unstable or unsafe areas.
- Helping communities fulfill their vision for future waterfront development and shoreline use.
- Providing increased clarity to the development community through more consistent ordinances and permitting requirements.
- Planning for public access and recreational opportunities in shoreline areas.
- Giving preference to water-dependent uses that rely on shorelines for economic viability.

Master programs also contribute to local and statewide environmental vitality by:

- Helping protect our marine waters, lakes, and stream systems from pollution.
- Protecting the overall health and function of shorelines and public waters for both public and private use.
- Protecting critical fish and wildlife habitat.
- Restoring unhealthy shorelines and increasing the health of public waters.

State & Local Roles in the Update Process:

Local Governments:

- Provide shoreline planning leadership within their jurisdictions and ensure stakeholder involvement.
- Prepare, adopt, oversee, and enforce their shoreline master programs.
- Send all shoreline master program updates to Ecology for approval.
- Keep shoreline master programs current with periodic reviews.

WA State Department of Ecology (Ecology):

- Provides guidelines on the essential elements that local shoreline master programs must include.
- Provides grants and technical assistance to local governments.
- Reviews and approves local shoreline master programs to confirm consistency with state law.
- Once approved, individual local shoreline master programs become part of the overall state shoreline master program.

What an SMP Does NOT do:

- Take away constitutional protections for private property rights.
- Require existing shoreline homes to be relocated.
- Try to return our shorelines to pre-development conditions.

For More Information Visit:

Thurston County SMP Info: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/SMA/guidelines/index.html>

Shoreline Master Programs: www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/shorelines/smp/index

Citizens Guide to Shoreline Master Programs: www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/shorelines/smp/citizen

Shoreline Management Data and Info: www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/sma/data/index