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Contact: Josh Peters
Senior Planner, Long-Range Planning
Jefferson County Department of Community Development
(360) 379-4466 or jpeters@co.jefferson.wa.us
www.co.jefferson.wa.us/commdevelopment

Jefferson County Planning Commission to Host Critical Areas Workshops

Port Townsend, WA—The Jefferson County Planning Commission is scheduled to host three Critical Areas workshops at consecutive regular meetings, May 18, June 1 and June 15. The meetings are from 6:30-9:30 p.m. in the Spruce Room at the WSU Learning Center at 201 W. Patison Rd. in Port Hadlock and the workshops will be first on the agenda. The public is invited to observe and offer comments.

“Critical Areas” is a term from the State Growth Management Act that describes natural features such as aquifer recharge areas, geologically hazardous areas, wetlands, and fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas. Local governments must use “best available science” when adopting policies and regulations to protect critical areas.

“The Critical Areas workshops are a step in the process toward considering amendments to our development code involving the designation and protection of critical areas,” said Josh Peters, Senior Planner for the County Dept. of Community Development. “We have invited agency staff and private consultants and researchers to provide further information in their areas of expertise.”

On May 18, Gretchen Lux from the Department of Ecology and other guests will address the latest information on wetlands. Ross Goodwin of the Dept. of Natural Resources will explain the new typing system for streams.

The June 1 meeting will feature Channel Migration Zones with Jeanne Klawon of the US Bureau of Reclamation and Sue Perkins of Perkins Geosciences. They authored a pair of CMZ studies and maps that were produced for south county rivers last year. Neil Harrington, a biologist on contract with Jefferson County, will present a preliminary draft Shoreline Inventory & Analysis that will later be used in the update of the County Shoreline Master Program.

Tentatively for June 15, the topic will be wildlife habitat designation and protection. Suzanne Tomassi is the wildlife biologist commissioned by the County in 2004 to use aerial photography interpretation to create a map of core habitat areas and corridors.

For more information, contact Senior Planner Josh Peters at (360) 379-4466 or via e-mail at jpeters@co.jefferson.wa.us. The County also has a Critical Areas webpage: www.co.jefferson.wa.us/commdevelopment/CriticalAreas.

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