

For Immediate Release – December 6, 2006

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Shoreline Committees Consider Science and Policies of the Shoreline Master Program Update

Port Townsend, WA—After a productive and informative Shoreline Charrette Primer in October, the Jefferson County Department of Community Development project team of staff and consultants continues efforts to form a Preliminary Draft SMP. To assist their work, the next Shoreline Policy Advisory Committee (SPAC) meeting will be held on Thursday, December 14th from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Jefferson County Library. In addition, members of the project team will meet that afternoon with the Shoreline Technical Advisory Committee (STAC) from 2 to 5 p.m. at the WSU Learning Center Spruce Room in Port Hadlock.

“We were pleased with the level of participation in the 3-day Primer event with about 150 people attending overall. The focus was to educate and engage the public for participating in the comprehensive update to the Shoreline Master Program,” said Michelle McConnell, project coordinator for the Shoreline Master Program (SMP) Update. “Next, we’ll meet with our advisors to continue gathering their input. In the morning, we meet with our policy advisors to review highlights and accomplishments from the Primer event, and will spend most of the meeting discussing the Master Program goals and policies.”

Required Master Program elements include: 1) economic development; 2) public access; 3) recreation; 4) circulation (transportation and utilities); 5) shoreline uses (housing, business, industry, agriculture, etc.); 6) conservation of natural resources; 7) historic, cultural, scientific and educational sites and structures; 8) flood damage prevention; and 9) other elements deemed appropriate or necessary to the policies and goals of the SMP Update.

“In the afternoon, we’ll meet with our technical advisors about current watershed health and shoreline conditions to help finalize the Draft Shoreline Inventory and Characterization Report,” McConnell said. A Restoration Plan is being drafted to help identify existing efforts and additional opportunities for maintaining the ‘no net loss of shoreline ecological functions’ required by State law.

Jefferson County received a grant from the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) to update its Shoreline Master Program in compliance with the 1971 State Shoreline Management Act and the 2003 SMP Guidelines. After a formal review process with Planning Commission, Board of County Commissioners and the public, the revised SMP is scheduled for submittal to Ecology in June 2007.

This is an ongoing opportunity for anyone interested to learn more about local shorelines, regulation requirements and to give input on shoreline management for Jefferson County. A full Shoreline Charrette scheduled for February 2007 is being postponed until the spring. Staff, consultants, committees, elected officials, stakeholders and the public will be invited to participate in this dynamic community workshop to revise the SMP.

Anyone interested to learn more can contact Michelle McConnell at 379.4484 or via e-mail at mmcconnell@co.jefferson.wa.us to join an e-mail distribution list for meeting announcements and periodic project updates. Advisory committee meetings are open to the public. More detailed information is available on the County’s Web site at www.co.jefferson.wa.us/commdevelopment/ShorelinePlanning.htm.

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