Public Participation Plan for the Shoreline Master Program Update

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**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

Introduction ........................................................................................................................................ 1

Overview of Shoreline Master Program Update Process ................................................................. 2

  Phase 1: Project Initiation .................................................................................................................. 2

  Phase 2: Preparation of Technical Background Documents ............................................................ 3

  Phase 3: Draft Shoreline Master Program Development ................................................................. 3

  Phase 4: Local Adoption ................................................................................................................... 4

  Phase 5: State Approval .................................................................................................................. 4

Shoreline Master Program Stakeholders ............................................................................................ 6

Structure of the Public Involvement Program .................................................................................... 8

  Public Involvement Program Goal and Objectives .......................................................................... 8

  Organization of Public Involvement Program ................................................................................ 8

Public Involvement Program Tasks by Phase .................................................................................... 11

  Phase 1: Project Initiation ................................................................................................................ 11

  Phase 2: Preparation of Technical Background Documents ........................................................... 11

  Phase 3: Draft Shoreline Master Program Development ............................................................... 12

  Phase 4: Local Adoption ................................................................................................................ 13

  Phase 5: State Approval ................................................................................................................ 14

Other Public Involvement Methods & Activities ............................................................................... 15

  Communications ............................................................................................................................ 15

  Surveys and Questionnaires ......................................................................................................... 15

  Outreach Coordination with other Stakeholder Groups ................................................................. 15
INTRODUCTION

The Shoreline Management Act (SMA) requires Pacific County to update its Shoreline Master Program periodically “…to reflect changing local circumstances, new information, or improved data.”

Public participation is a requirement of both local and state government when updating a Shoreline Master Program. RCW 90.58.120 requires that local governments “…insure that all persons and entities having an interest in the guidelines and master programs developed under this chapter are provided with a full opportunity for involvement in both their development and implementation….” This section also requires local governments to extend this invitation to other agencies of local, state, and federal government.

The Shoreline Master Program procedural rules provide guidance to local governments on how to implement these participation requirements. These rules emphasize:

- Developing and distributing a plan and procedures that describes how the public will participate
- Providing opportunities for early and continuous participation by the public
- Communicating with state agencies and affected Indian tribes
- Documenting efforts that demonstrate how the local government complied with these participation requirements

This Public Involvement Plan describes how Pacific County intends to comply with these provisions of the SMA and its Guidelines as it updates its Shoreline Master Program over the next three years. The plan begins with an overview of the proposed work program and then describes:

- Shoreline Master Program Stakeholders;
- The Structure of the Public Involvement Program;
- Public Involvement Program Tasks by Phase
- Other Public Involvement Methods and Activities

\(^1\) WAC 173-26-090
OVERVIEW OF
SHORELINE MASTER PROGRAM UPDATE PROCESS

The Pacific County Shoreline Master Program (Shoreline Master Program) update process consists of five separate phases: Project Initiation, Preparation of Technical Background Documents, Draft Shoreline Master Program Development, Local Shoreline Master Program Adoption, and State Approval.

Phase 1: Project Initiation

The focus of this first phase of the project is to organize Pacific County in preparing for the Shoreline Master Program update process. The objectives during Project Initiation are to:

- Develop a scope of work and schedule for the Shoreline Master Program update process.

- Execute a grant contract between Pacific County and the Washington State Department of Ecology (ECY) for funding to complete the update. Pacific County received a grant of $478,260 to complete all five phases.

- Secure consulting services to assist the Pacific County Department of Community Development in completing the Shoreline Master Program update.

- Hold preliminary coordination discussions with the Cities of Ilwaco, Long Beach, Raymond, and South Bend on the Shoreline Master Program update process. The Cities of Raymond and South Bend have decided to coordinate their efforts with Pacific County in the Preparation of Technical Background Documents.

- Meet with interested stakeholder groups to discuss participation involvement

- Prepare the Public Involvement Plan, including organizing the initial participation methods described later in the plan.

- Conduct a community Shoreline Master Program update informational meeting that describes the overall planning and public engagement process.

- Appoint and organize a Shoreline Planning Committee that will coordinate public outreach and prepare a draft Shoreline Master Program.
These activities in the Project Initiation phase began in July 2013 and will be complete by mid-March 2014.

Phase 2: Preparation of Technical Background Documents

The second phase of the update process involves preparing the technical background documents that establishes the baseline of information that Pacific County will use to develop the draft Shoreline Master Program. The county will prepare three technical documents steps during this phase.

- The Preliminary Shoreline Jurisdiction Maps will identify shorelines of the state in the county covered under the Shoreline Master Program. These maps will be available mid-March 2014.

- The Shoreline Inventory, Analysis, and Characterization Report inventories relevant and current information about the shorelines covered under the Shoreline Master Program. It also conducts an analysis and characterization of both the shoreline ecological conditions and the built environment. A first draft of this report will be available for review and comment late June 2014, with the final report issued late October 2014.

- The Shoreline Restoration Plan provides a strategy and identifies areas for improving shoreline ecological functions over time. The scheduled release for a draft of this document will be the end of October 2014, with the final due late January 2015.

Phase 3: Draft Shoreline Master Program Development

Using the Technical Background Documents, Pacific County begins the process of drafting the vision, goals, policies, and regulations for the updated Shoreline Master Program. This phase integrates a majority of the intensive public outreach efforts described later in this Public Involvement Plan. The complete draft Shoreline Master Program will include:

- A community visioning report
- Draft general goals and policies with optional general regulations
- Draft environment regulations
- Draft environment-specific shoreline use and modification policies, regulations, and standards
- Draft administrative procedures
• A cumulative impacts analysis of the Draft Shoreline Master Program on shoreline ecological functions

A first draft Shoreline Master Program will be available for public review and comment in June 2015 and a second draft made available in November 2015.

**Phase 4: Local Adoption**

With a completed draft Shoreline Master Program at hand, the local adoption process begins moving forward. The main steps in this process entail:

• Assembling a final Draft Shoreline Master Program with all supporting technical background documents
• Conducting an environmental review under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA)
• Issuing a 60-day notice of intent to adopt in conformance with RCW 36.70A.106
• Review and public hearing before the Planning Commission
• Review and public hearing before the Board of Commissioners
• Preparing a responsiveness summary to comments and questions held during the public hearings
• Resolution by Board of Commissioners to forward a Draft Shoreline Master Program to ECY

The Local Adoption phase will take place around June 2016.

**Phase 5: State Approval**

Preparing a Shoreline Master Program is a county-state partnership. While developing and implementing the Shoreline Master Program is a county responsibility, the Department of Ecology has review authority over the plan to ensure it meets the Shoreline Management Act and its administrative guidelines. The state’s review process also represents the interests of all Washington citizens for county shorelines along the Pacific Ocean and those rivers classified as Shorelines of Statewide Significance.

The key steps during Phase 5 include:
• ECY staff review of the county’s proposed Shoreline Master Program for compliance with state law

• Holding a 30-day public comment period, including the convening of a public hearing if deemed necessary

• Possible negotiations with the county to make changes to the proposed Shoreline Master Program if deemed noncompliant with state law

• Issuing a letter of approval that allows the Board of Commissioners to adopt the Shoreline Master Program by ordinance

The county anticipates this phase may conclude between December 2016 and March 2017.
SHORELINE MASTER PROGRAM STAKEHOLDERS

Stakeholders include all citizens, businesses, interest groups, and governmental entities that have the desire to participate in planning for the future of Pacific County shorelines. They play a critical part in the development of a Shoreline Master Program by sharing knowledge, expertise, opinions, values, and ideas about shorelines and their management.

Pacific County recognizes that stakeholders have many different interests relating to the shorelines. These interests can focus on shorelines as a place for working, living, recreation, or appreciating and protecting the natural environment. Many people, groups, and entities share a combination of these interests.

The process of identifying the different stakeholders who may wish to participate in the development of the Shoreline Master Program is an important step in helping the county design a planning and participation process that matches with the interests of those most likely to participate. While some stakeholders may wish to participate throughout the entire planning process, the county recognizes that others may focus only on a few issues or topics. Most people have only a limited amount of time available and they want to use it effectively. Thus, the county anticipates that it will encourage greater participation by designing the planning process around targeted stakeholder interests.

Six broad categories of potential stakeholders in Pacific County may wish to participate in the Shoreline Master Program update. The table below identifies these categories and includes a preliminary list of specific stakeholders.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>General public</th>
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<tr>
<td>• Interested citizens</td>
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<tr>
<td>• Shoreline property owners</td>
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<td>• Shoreline residents</td>
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<td>• Tourists</td>
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<table>
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<th>Businesses</th>
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<td>• Shellfish growers &amp; producers</td>
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<td>• Marinas and boat businesses</td>
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<td>• Commercial forestry</td>
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<td>• Construction &amp; real estate</td>
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<td>• Fishing &amp; marine-related uses</td>
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<td>• Agriculture</td>
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<td>• Waterfront commercial</td>
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<td>• Tourism &amp; lodging businesses</td>
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<th>Nonprofit organizations</th>
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STRUCTURE OF THE PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM

Public Involvement Program Goal and Objectives

Pacific County is committed to preparing a Shoreline Master Program update that reflects local values and needs in a manner consistent with state law and regulations. The county intends to achieve this goal by implementing a community-driven, participatory process that:

- Creates multiple participation opportunities for interested stakeholders
- Ensures full and equal access to information essential for making informed decisions
- Engages participants in positive, meaningful dialog with one another
- Relies on a variety of participation methods that matches individual communication styles
- Achieves sustainable community agreements
- Incorporates existing participatory structures within the county

Organization of Public Involvement Program

The Pacific County public involvement program will rely on a Shoreline Planning Committee, the Pacific County Planning Commission, the Pacific County Board of Commissioners, and the Washington State Department of Ecology. Each of these bodies will engage stakeholders consistent with the goal and objectives of the Shoreline Master Program’s public involvement program. A description of how each one will do this follows below.

Figure 1: Public Involvement Structure

![Diagram showing the public involvement structure involving stakeholders, Shoreline Planning Committee, Planning Commission, Board of Commissioners, and Department of Ecology.](image-url)
**Shoreline Planning Committee**

The backbone of the public involvement process is the Shoreline Planning Committee. This committee will consist of a 15-member committee appointed by the Board of Commissioners that has twelve representative community stakeholders and three Planning Commission members. The job of this committee is to prepare an initial draft of the Shoreline Master Program as it works at the grassroots level with stakeholders.

The committee will begin their work by first engaging community stakeholders at workshops and open house events to gather ideas, values, and opinions on specific shoreline management issues. Using this stakeholder data, the committee next prepares a working draft Shoreline Master Program. It will then bring that draft back to community stakeholders to review and comment.

**Planning Commission**

The role of the Planning Commission is to evaluate the draft Shoreline Master Program created by the Shoreline Planning Committee for conformance with the county’s comprehensive plan and development regulations as prepared under the Growth Management Act. It also solicits stakeholder comment on the draft Shoreline Master Program through its formal public comment structure. Planning Commission involvement concludes with the adoption of a recommendation to the Board of Commissioners regarding the adoption of a draft Shoreline Master Program.

**Board of Commissioners**

Once the Board of Commissioners receives a draft Shoreline Master Program and recommendation from the Planning Commission, it begins its own review process. The board may make additional changes to the Shoreline Master Program and then take testimony from stakeholders through a final public hearing. Based on stakeholder response at the public hearing, the board will take action by adopting a resolution that forwards a final draft Shoreline Master Program to the Department of Ecology for review and approval.

**Department of Ecology**

The Department of Ecology also plays a public involvement role by providing a 30-day comment period as it begins its review. The department also has the option of holding a public hearing.

If the department determines any part of the county’s proposed Shoreline Master Program is not in conformance with state law and regulations, it will seek an appropriate
resolution with the Board of Commissioners. The board and the department may ask for additional stakeholder comment at that time. Once the Department of Ecology approves the Shoreline Master Program, the board can then adopt the plan by ordinance.

**County Staff and Project Consultants**

Two critical elements imbedded behind the scenes in the public involvement structure are the county staff and their project consultants. They are responsible for providing support services to the Shoreline Planning Committee, the Planning Commission, and the Board of Commissioners in designing, coordinating, and facilitating the public involvement process. They will also be responsible for developing and revising the draft Shoreline Master Program under the guidance of the committee, commission, and board.

Project coordination at the county will be the responsibility of Faith Taylor-Eldred, Director of Community Development, and Tim Crose, Planning Director. The county intends to contract with two firms. One firm will be responsible for designing, organizing, and facilitating public meetings and open house events associated with the public involvement process. Another firm will be responsible for preparing the technical background reports and the draft Shoreline Master Program.
PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT PROGRAM TASKS BY PHASE

Each phase of the Pacific County Shoreline Master Program update process has specific public involvement program tasks. The summary below outlines these public involvement program tasks by phase, responsibility, and schedule.

Phase 1: Project Initiation

Board of Commissioners Public Involvement Program Tasks

1. Appoint the 15-member Shoreline Planning Committee. (March 2014)

County Staff and Project Consultants Public Involvement Program Tasks

1. Identify and recruit stakeholders for the Shoreline Planning Committee. (March 2014)

2. Conduct a community Shoreline Master Program orientation session in South Bend and Long Beach. This event will describe why the county is updating its Shoreline Master Program, how it will do it, and how stakeholders can participate. (April 2014)

3. Conduct organizational meetings with the newly appointed Shoreline Planning Committee. (May - June 2014)

Phase 2: Preparation of Technical Background Documents

County Staff and Project Consultants Public Involvement Program Tasks

1. Identify and contact potential interested stakeholders who will provide data and peer review of the Shoreline Inventory, Analysis, and Characterization Report. These contacts typically include local, state, and federal agencies; environmental organizations; and special interest groups with technical expertise. (March 2014)

2. Collate comments on Shoreline Inventory, Analysis, and Characterization Report received from interested stakeholders. (April 2014)

3. Hold an open house event hosted by county staff and project consultants to share information and receive comments on the Shoreline Inventory, Analysis, and Characterization Report. The Cities of Raymond and South Bend will also be participating at the South Bend open house. (May 2014)
4. Identify and contact stakeholders that will provide information regarding the Shoreline Restoration Plan. (August 2014)

Phase 3: Draft Shoreline Master Program Development

Shoreline Planning Committee Public Involvement Program Tasks

1. Host a community shoreline-visioning workshop for stakeholders in South Bend and Long Beach. (December 2014)

2. Sponsor workshops in South Bend and Long Beach on a series of shoreline planning issues for stakeholders to share ideas, opinions, and values related to:
   - Agriculture
   - Forestry
   - Shoreline residential development
   - Public access & recreation
   - Conservation & critical areas
   - Aquaculture
   - Coastal marine uses
   - Commercial & industrial shoreline uses
   - Transportation & public infrastructure
   - Mining activities
   - Flood hazards
   - Shoreline modification
   (January – March 2015)

3. Conduct open public meetings on preparing a draft Shoreline Master Program based on stakeholder ideas, opinions, and values. Allow time at each meeting for public comment. (March – June 2015)

4. Host a presentation, open house, and listening post in South Bend and Long Beach to allow stakeholders to review and comment on a draft Shoreline Master Program. (September 2015)

5. Convene a meeting (if necessary) to explain changes to the draft Shoreline Master Program based on earlier responses from stakeholders. (October 2015)

County Staff and Project Consultants Public Involvement Program Tasks

1. Prepare a Community Visioning Report for public dissemination. (January 2015)

2. Provide neutral facilitation services to design and manage each meeting, workshop, or open house event. (On-going)

3. Prepare summaries on outcomes of each meeting, workshop, or open house event and publish on website. (On-going)
4. Help organize and attend quarterly countywide shoreline planning meetings with the Cities of Ilwaco, Long Beach, Raymond, and South Bend. (On-going)

5. Communicate with the neighboring Counties of Grays Harbor, Lewis, and Wahkiakum to coordinate environment designations. (On-going)

**Phase 4: Local Adoption**

**Planning Commission Public Involvement Program Tasks**

1. Conduct open public meetings on the review of the draft Shoreline Master Program; allow for formal public comment period at each meeting. (November 2015 – January 2016)

2. Hold a public hearing on the draft Shoreline Master Program to solicit input from stakeholders on the draft Shoreline Master Program. (February 2016)

**Board of Commissioners Public Involvement Program Tasks**

1. Conduct open public meetings on the review of the draft Shoreline Master Program; allow for formal public comment period at each meeting. (May – June 2016)

2. Hold a public hearing on the draft Shoreline Master Program to solicit input from stakeholders on draft Shoreline Master Program. (June 2016)

**County Staff and Project Consultants Public Involvement Program Tasks**

1. Provide GMA 60-day notice of intent to adopt development regulations at least 60 days in advance of final approval. (February 2016)

2. Conduct an environmental review under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) with a public comment period on the draft Shoreline Master Program before the Planning Commission public hearing. (February 2016)

3. Prepare a responsiveness summary to all comments received during the Board of Commissioner’s public hearing and SEPA environmental review. (June 2016)
Phase 5: State Approval

1. The Department of Ecology will provide a 30-day public comment period before issuing a decision on the proposed final Shoreline Master Program. (After June 2016 – date unknown)

2. The Department of Ecology may conduct one or more public hearings before issuing a decision on the proposed final Shoreline Master Program. (After June 2016 – date unknown)
OTHER PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT METHODS & ACTIVITIES

During the entire course of updating the Shoreline Master Program, the county will implement additional public involvement methods and activities to engage stakeholders. Some of these methods and activities will be ongoing while others may be less frequent.

Communications

1. Develop, launch, and maintain a project website for disseminating information about the Shoreline Master Program update process, its work program, participation events, and related documents and meeting summaries.

2. Prepare periodic news releases for area newspapers informing about upcoming events and document releases.

3. Disseminate newsletters and brochures on the Shoreline Master Program and special topics.


5. Set up and use email distribution lists to inform stakeholders of participation events and document releases.

Surveys and Questionnaires

Occasionally the county will be interested in fielding stakeholder ideas, values, and opinions on a variety of issues outside of meetings, workshop, and open house events. County staff and project consultants intend to use printed and electronic surveys during the update process. Results from these surveys and questionnaires will be available through the project website.

Outreach Coordination with other Stakeholder Groups

Pacific County anticipates other organizations and interest groups will be conducting public involvement activities and events related to the Shoreline Master Program update. These may include coastal resource groups, salmon recovery organizations, shellfish growers, fishing organizations, environmental organizations, and property rights interest groups.

County staff and project consultants will work with these groups to coordinate their efforts and share information. County staff will try to participate in outreach activities whenever time and budget allows.