



May 11, 2011

Dear Whatcom County Planning Commission,

The Sustainable Connections Green Building & Smart Growth program, now in its ninth year, has attracted over 5,500 industry professionals to educational workshops, seminars, tours and conferences focused on sustainable buildings, low impact development and livable communities.

Sustainable Connections Green Building program works directly with low impact development projects, education (both outreach and trainings), collaboration with our local construction and design community, and an effective reputation for creating streamlined action plans to reduce municipal barriers for green building strategies. Low impact development practices including those principals outlined in the Birch Bay Watershed Action Plan are consistent with our program work and area of expertise.

Sustainable Connections is supportive of Whatcom County staff recommendation for the proposed addition to the Title 20 (WCC 20.50) rating system for projects that wish to qualify as Low Impact Development, and the amendment to the Critical Areas Ordinance (WCC 16.16) for off-site mitigation. These changes provide meaningful incentives to landowners while reducing development impact within the Birch Bay Watershed.

The proposed amendments and incentives are an effective tool to treating polluted runoff. Sustainable Connections will continue to provide educational trainings that complement the work and recommendations included in this plan. This consistency supports Whatcom County's commitment to promote effective land use, protect environmentally sensitive areas, and help to create opportunities for a healthier Puget Sound.

Thank you for your consideration,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Nick Hartrich". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Nick Hartrich, Green Building & Smart Growth Program Manger, Sustainable Connections