

Watershed Based Land Use Management

JULY 2010

BIRCH BAY WATERSHED ACTION PLAN

Background -

Whatcom County received a grant from the Environmental Protection Agency in 2008 to implement watershed based land use planning. Birch Bay and Terrell Creek Watersheds were selected due to new water quality concerns, good wildlife habitat, coupled with high population growth. This effort builds on the Watershed Characterization work done in 2007, but will reflect goals outlined by the many community planning activities of the last five years.

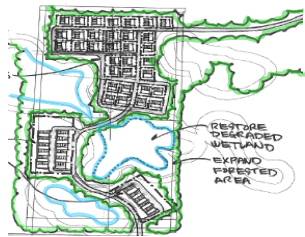
PROJECT SUMMARY AND GOALS

Project Work Products

- Development Manual for Green residential and commercial projects
- Mitigation of impacts to streams and wetlands through an In-lieu-fee program
- Incentives and new policies that help facilitate community development

Implementation Actions

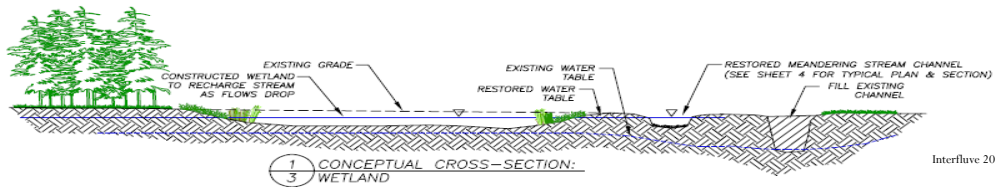
Minimize Ecological Impacts of Future Growth



Clear guidelines that consolidate regulations into one illustrated manual that focuses on conservation design and stormwater management through low impact development.

Leverage Mitigation to Achieve Watershed Goals

Consolidate small impacts to streams and wetlands into better functioning mitigation projects where they can provide the most long term good. Program would allow project developers to purchase credits in an off site mitigation program that is managed by an entity responsible for long term success.



Goals and Outcomes

The principal goal of the proposed effort is to implement a watershed-focused planning model for land use decision-making that maintains and improves water quality and wildlife habitat while improving the permit process. The intended outcomes are:

- Minimize new impervious surfaces built in the watershed
- Successful impact mitigation that improves water quality and creates habitat,
- Utilize water resource inventory and analysis to improve permit review

Timeline and Project Coordination

