

# Birch Bay Watershed Action Plan

## Feb 17, 2011 Public Meeting Summary

**BIRCH BAY BIBLE COMMUNITY CHURCH**  
**7039 JACKSON ROAD, BLAINE WA**

### AGENDA

From 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM on November 17, 2011, Whatcom County is having a public meeting to get feedback on the Draft Low Impact Development (LID) Manual and Draft Habitat Mitigation Fund for the Birch Bay Watershed.

As part of the Birch Bay Watershed Action Plan, these optional tools are aimed at facilitating community supported development and improving the success of stream and wetland buffer mitigation. This program implements goals shared by the Birch Bay Watershed Planning and Characterization Pilot Study (ESA Adolfson 2007), the BB Stormwater Plan (CH2MHill 2007), and the BB Community Sub-area Plan (Kask 2004).

We need your help to make this program a success! Please send comments by February 28, 2011 to Peter Gill (pgill@co.whatcom.wa.us)

7:00 – 7:30 Open House

7:30 – 8:00 Presentation by Peter Gill, Margaret Clancy, and Adam Merrill (ESA Adolfson Inc.). They will review the draft LID manual for Birch Bay and Habitat Mitigation Fund. This included a brief review of the purpose of this alternative development option, site design using LID practices, offsite mitigation for buffer impacts and program eligibility.

8:00 – 8:30 Questions and Comments

---

Public Review Drafts of the LID Manual and Habitat Mitigation Fund available on our web site: [http://www.co.whatcom.wa.us/pds/naturalresources/specialprojects/actionplan\\_downloads.jsp](http://www.co.whatcom.wa.us/pds/naturalresources/specialprojects/actionplan_downloads.jsp)

## MEETING SUMMARY NOTES

The evening meeting was attended by 15-20 members of the public, including three Planning Commission members: Gary Honcoop, Michelle Luke, and David Onkels. Staff and two members of the consultant team were available until 7:30 to answer questions one on one. A presentation and question answer period followed until approximately 9:00 PM. A summary of the verbal questions and comments follows:

- Is there buy-in from other County departments on reduced road width? What about the fire District? Parking in some neighborhoods includes trailers and boats, etc. Make sure there is adequate parking for new subdivisions.
- Is there a way for neighbors to comment on development proposals that are implemented via the manual—will this be the same as for conventional development proposals?

- What if the trees next to my house are a hazard, can they be cut down? Include language that creates a preference for tree retention areas that are adequately distant from the building envelope (so people don't have to remove the trees at a later date)
- Can tree retention include small trees (dogwood?) that don't block out neighbors views. Should tree retention be any native vegetation?
- Why should a developer get more points for open space or impervious surface in a Urban Growth Area than outside of the Urban Growth Area? Zoning for more density should not be a factor.
- How do we monitor whether more impervious area will be added after the landowner gets a permit?
- Is a notice on title already required?
- Critical Areas Ordinance does not allow for mitigation outside of the watershed where the impact occurred, does the Pilot Study allow for this to happen since the Department of Ecology helped author the study? The Manual should specify.
- Wetlands can be delineated differently depending on who does the delineation. All up to interpretations.
- Need to make the program simpler, even than the manual.
- What is the population density to qualify for NPDES stormwater standards? Will Birch Bay be part of new permit after census numbers come out?
- Audit requirements for Habitat Mitigation Plan should show how much of the money being collected is used to manage the program. Set by law a ceiling for how much of fund can be used for overhead.
- Allowing for cumulative impacts to buffers on one stream to be mitigated in another, could negatively effect the most downstream landowners. This is a problem with the Habitat Mitigation Fund. Make sure there are clear minimum buffer standards so that no stream gets totally degraded.
- Will this process cost more for a developer/builder? Are the incentives significant enough to want to go through certification?
- Make sure the language about the free initial screening process is clear and accurate.
- How do we get this information out to the general public, the people building homes that have little knowledge of development regulations?