

General Timeline of Actions Regarding Proposed Lake Whatcom Amendments

Where we started...

- The Washington State Department of Ecology's Lake Whatcom Watershed Total Phosphorus and Bacteria Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDL) Water Quality Study Findings (November 2008) suggest greater management over phosphorus loading into the lake from development. The TMDL, also referred to as the Water Quality Clean-up Plan, is currently being developed, and will call for addressing phosphorus loading from development to achieve no additional phosphorus loading beyond a native, forested condition (per the Department of Ecology's Stormwater Management Manual for Western Washington).
- The Lake Whatcom Management Program (LWMP) launches the *Silver Beach Creek Pilot Project (SBCP)* in 2009. SBCP involves implementing a comprehensive strategy of capital improvement projects, public outreach and education, stewardship efforts, and enforcement in the Silver Beach Creek watershed. Successes from this pilot project are intended to be applied throughout the entire Lake Whatcom watershed.
- In June 2009, the City of Bellingham adopted enhanced land use and storm water regulations to treat phosphorus loading from development. A yearly analysis on the effectiveness of the regulations is being conducted, with results shared with Whatcom County through the LWMP's Interjurisdictional Coordinating Team (ICT).
- Whatcom County Council approves the 2010-2014 Lake Whatcom Management Program 5-Year Work Plan on August 10, 2010 (Resolution 2010-031). The work plan guides management activities focused on water quality issues through tasks within twelve program areas. Specific tasks are developed to assess and amend development regulations throughout the watershed based on the results and findings of the SBCP, the City's enhanced Lake Whatcom Regulatory Chapter, and the pending TMDL.
- On March 10, 2011, Whatcom County agrees to accelerate the timeline of enhanced development regulations for the Lake Whatcom watershed per a request from the Department of Ecology, resulting in immediate consultation in developing the proposed amendments between the Whatcom County and Department of Ecology.
- By May 2011, Whatcom County and the Department of Ecology agree on the stormwater treatment criteria utilized in the development of the proposed amendments. The goal is to achieve no additional phosphorus loading beyond a native, forested condition. If achieved, these regulations would meet compliance with the TMDL.

Where we are now...

- Two public workshops on the proposed amendments were conducted in November 1 and 2, 2011.
- A public hearing at the Planning Commission was initiated on November 17, 2011, with the public record held open until January 12, 2012.
- A special presentation to the Building Industry Association of Whatcom County was conducted on December 8, 2011.
- A technical review of the code, with members of the engineering community, was facilitated on December 19, 2011.
- On January 9, 2012, the Planning Commission will have an informational work session with the Department of Ecology presenting background information on the TMDL and the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) Phase II Permit.
- On January 12, 2012, the public hearing continues at the Planning Commission. If closed at that time, a worksession will follow.
- Once a recommendation is made, the Whatcom County Planning Commission will forward that recommendation on the proposed amendments to the County Council.