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STATE OF WASHINGTON

ECB Shorelines Protection Subcommittee: Shoreline Protection Recommendations

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Background

The ECB Shorelines Protection Subcommittee shared its initial proposed shoreline protection goal and associated recommendations at the May ECB meeting. The subcommittee has met twice since the last ECB meeting to refine its recommendations based on feedback from the ECB meeting and additional discussion. The Subcommittee has worked to identify and draft recommendations for the ECB on the key elements of the shoreline protection topic that support the most protective outcome. The Subcommittee has focused initially on recommendations for marine shorelines and proposes to follow a similar process for freshwater shoreline recommendations. This is an updated version of the initial memo sent to the ECB reflecting the minor changes from the meeting on May 4th.

Problem and Purpose Statement

Problem: We have lost, and are continuing to lose, significant shoreline habitat and the ecological functions needed for Puget Sound recovery. We have an opportunity right now to reverse the loss through regulatory, policy, and other means.

Purpose: The ECB Shoreline Protection Subcommittee's purpose is to bring back to the ECB and the Leadership Council clear recommendations for action to:

1. Develop an integrated comprehensive strategy to stop the loss, and increase the quantity and quality, of nearshore habitat and ecosystem functions;
2. Define and meet the no-net-loss objective as a means to "stop the bleeding" of our nearshore ecosystem function through regulatory clarity;
3. Propose actionable means to stop the loss, and increase the quantity and quality, of nearshore habitat and ecosystem functions.

Recommendations

<u>1. Shoreline Protection Goal/Indicators/Targets (supporting a comprehensive strategy)</u>:

- Drift cells are an appropriate scale at which to assess nearshore ecological function and to focus protection and restoration actions;
- Evaluate recovery of Puget Sound marine shoreline systems in terms of drift cells. Refine this evaluation based on the various types of drift cell conditions and geomorphic types, focusing actions to address the most sensitive types (e.g., embayments, feeder bluffs, etc.). Focusing evaluation and actions in this way will make assessment and action at the drift cell scale more locally relevant;
- Analyze and assess marine shoreline indicators (e.g., shoreline alteration, eelgrass beds, etc.) and associated targets in terms of properly functioning drift cells. Indicators should be linked to PSNERP data and efforts to apply this data locally, such as through SMP updates.

- *Near-term action: WDFW and Ecology coordinate packaging PSNERP data to be used by local governments for SMP updates.*
- *Near-term action: Support WDFW to assess and develop credible data source for shoreline armoring status and trends related to HPA.*

2. No-net-loss of Shoreline Ecological Function:

- Focus resources on supporting Ecology and local governments to define and implement no-net-loss at the local level. This includes providing guidance and support to local governments to meet/evaluate no-net-loss at the scale of drift cells and their related ecological conditions.
    - The ECB and Leadership Council should support funding and capacity for local governments to update and implement Shoreline Master Programs.
    - The ECB and Leadership Council should support funding to measure and track implementation of no-net-loss.
    - The ECB and Leadership Council should support Ecology in providing guidance to local governments on understanding shoreline ecological functions and implementation of the no-net-loss standard in terms of drift cells.
    - The ECB and Leadership Council should support Ecology in working with local governments that have completed or nearly completed SMP updates to integrate new guidance on meeting/evaluating no-net-loss in terms of drift cells.

3. Other Opportunities:

- Policy direction to establish a net increase in shoreline ecosystem functions.
    - *Near-term action: Develop and support legislation led by Ecology to make green shoreline alternatives easier to implement where they improve shoreline ecological function and make shoreline armoring more difficult where it degrades shoreline ecological function.*
- Develop and implement incentives (e.g. restoration program for shoreline property owners) to restore shoreline ecological functions that support properly functioning drift cells.