

**Okanogan County**  
**Shoreline Master Program Periodic Review & Update**  
**Public Participation Plan 2022 - 2023**

**Project Description**

Okanogan County is conducting a periodic update of its Shoreline Master Program (SMP) and is seeking to engage with the public and stakeholders for input and comments. The SMP helps our community plan for the future, balancing shoreline development with environmental protection, and provide for access to public shores and waters. The County wants to know what YOU value about shorelines and any issues YOU would like the SMP to address.

**What is the SMP?**

The SMP is a tool to plan and regulate the use of Washington shorelines. The SMPs are local land use policies and regulations that guide the use of Washington shorelines, public and private. The SMP's aim is to protect the shoreline for future generations, provide for public access to public waters and shores, and plan for shoreline use. The County's SMP includes our community's goals, policies, regulations, and programs focused on development, conservation, use, and restoration of our shorelines.

**Why Do We Care About Shoreline Management?**

The Shoreline Management Act (SMA) is intended to protect shoreline natural resources including the land, vegetation, wildlife, and aquatic habitats against adverse environmental effects while balancing beneficial development and public use. The SMA requires all counties and most cities and towns with shorelines to develop and implement a SMP.

**What is a Periodic Review?**

The Periodic review is meant to look at what has changed in the community and in the rules and bring our SMP, from June 26, 2018, up to date. It is required every eight years, under RCW 90.58.080(4) to make sure the County stays current and complies with the requirements of the SMA. The Periodic review includes this public participation plan.

**Why Is Public Participation Important?**

Since public use and enjoyment is the primary purpose of the SMA, the public needs an opportunity to participate. A Public Participation Plan (Plan) is required to describe how the County will encourage early and continuous public participation throughout the process of reviewing the SMP. This Plan describes the steps that Okanogan County will take to provide opportunities for public engagement and public comment.<sup>1</sup> This plan is a working document and will be adjusted as needed to provide for the greatest and broadest public participation.

**Public Participation Goals**

- Provide the public, all generations, including school age children, with timely information, an understanding of the process, and multiple opportunities to review and comment on proposed amendments to the SMP. Provide translated materials.
- Actively solicit information from citizens, property owners, and stakeholders about their concerns, questions and priorities for the process.
- Encourage the public to informally review and comment on proposed changes to the SMP

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<sup>1</sup> This plan is in addition to any other minimum requirements for public participation required by Okanogan County Municipal Code.

throughout the process and provide those comments to decision makers.

- Provide online workshops, meetings and hearings for both informal and formal public input at project milestones prior to decision-making by local officials.
- Consult and consider recommendations from neighboring jurisdictions, federal and state agencies, nonprofit salmon recovery organizations, Okanogan and Douglas County PUDs, Yakama and Colville Tribes.

The following is a general timeline that includes anticipated public participation opportunities. An up-to-date timeline will be posted and maintained on the County’s website.

## **SMP Periodic Review Timelines and Process**

## **Tasks**

### **PHASE 1: PROJECT OVERVIEW AND INITIATE PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

**Winter 2022**

**Planning Commission (PC) Meeting**

- Review public participation plan
- Announce launch of website and survey
- Engage with public and stakeholders

### **PHASE 2: PERIODIC REVIEW CHECKLIST**

**Winter 2022 PC Meeting**

- Present PowerPoint Presentation
- Review periodic update checklist
- Engage with public and stakeholders

### **PHASE 3: DRAFT UPDATED MASTER PROGRAM**

**Winter 2023 PC Meeting**

- Complete draft SMP
- Review draft code amendments
- Online open house refresh with draft code amendments
- Initiate public review and comment period

### **PHASE 4: PUBLIC REVIEW PROCESS**

**Winter 2023 PC Public Hearing**

- Complete SEPA Checklist & notice SEPA comment period concurrent with SMP Revision comment period
- Submit checklist to SEPA portal
- Revisit and revise based on comments
- Public Hearing with Planning Commission
- Recommendation to Board of County Commissioners (BOCC)

### **PHASE 5: BOCC APPROVAL**

**Spring 2023 BOCC Public Hearing**

- Final draft SMP, Record & PC Recommendation transmitted to BOCC.
- Public Meeting with BOCC for final approval and adoption by ordinance. No public comment accepted at this meeting

### **PHASE 6: STATE APPROVAL & ADOPTION Summer 2023**

- Submit draft amendments and checklist to Ecology for review
- Revise documents as needed
- Submit final draft and checklist to Ecology for final determination

## Opportunities for Community Input - Outreach

Okanogan County is committed to providing multiple opportunities for community input throughout the process. The County will use a variety of outreach approaches to inform the community and encourage their participation, including the following:

<b>Website</b>	The County's website will include an SMP webpage where interested parties can access status updates, draft documents, official notices, links to online workshops, meetings and hearings, minutes and other project information. The webpage, expected to go live on November 18, 2022, will be the primary repository of all information related to the SMP process. The page will include who to contact for more information and an email link for questions and comments.
<b>Survey</b>	A community survey will be conducted during the months of November - December 2022 to solicit specific feedback from interested parties and results will be posted on the webpage.
<b>Mailing Lists</b>	An email list of interested parties will be created, advertised and maintained by the County. The list will be used to notify interested parties regarding SMP progress and participation opportunities. Interested parties will be added to the list by contacting the Planning Department
<b>Comments</b>	Interested parties will be encouraged to provide comments to Okanogan County by letter, email and/or participation in meetings. All comments will be sent to the County Office of Planning & Development and made part of the record. The webpage will be the central repository for information under consideration. Documents will be available for review on the County's webpage and at County Planning Office with advance notice and copies will be provided at the established copying cost.
<b>County Commissioners</b>	The Planning Commission will be the primary forum for detailed review and recommendations to the Okanogan County Board of County Commissioners. Interested parties are encouraged to attend open public meetings and hearings and provide comments during review and deliberations and/or Planning Commission and open public meeting. Official notices will be published as established in County policy.
<b>Planning Commission</b>	The Planning Commission will receive monthly updates on the update process, proposed revisions and timelines and will hold a Public Hearing.
<b>News Media</b>	The local news media will be kept up-to-date on the process and receive copies of all official notices.
<b>Workshops/Presentations</b>	Make presentations to stakeholder groups, community organizations, and neighborhood associations. Provide comment forms for instant feedback.

## Stakeholders

Okanogan County will meet requirements of public and agency notices.

## Public Hearing

The Planning Commission will conduct a public comment period and at least one public hearing to solicit input on the SMP prior to submittal of a recommendation and transmittal of the official record to the Board of County Commissioners for final adoption prior to submittal to the Department of Ecology in May-June 2023. The Planning Commission will hold one public hearing before final adoption in June 2023.

The County will publish notices of all hearings that will state who is holding the comment period and/or hearing, the date and time, and the location of any public hearing. Notices will be published per official policy and comply with all other legal requirements such as the Americans with Disabilities Act. A notice will be sent to the email list (above) and the Department of Ecology.

## Roles and Responsibilities

Stakeholders have various roles in the SMP planning and reviewing process. For example, the public's role is to attend meetings and provide oral or written comments. User groups may develop position papers that they present to the Planning Commission. State and federal agencies may provide technical expertise and information about laws and regulations. The Okanogan County Planning Commission will act as the Shoreline Advisory Committee for this planning effort. The Commission may engage a technical committee, with members requested to provide suggestions and review scientific studies and other data about the local shoreline, analyze the inventory and characterization information, and provide science-based recommendations about shoreline issues. Providing there is an interest, the Commission may also form a citizens committee to review the public participation plan, shoreline policy issues, inventory and characterization, and recommends goals, policies and regulations. This committee also may help organize and conduct public participation events.

Appointed and elected officials also are stakeholders. A planning commission usually reviews all available information and recommendations from advisory committees, hears public comment at workshops and public hearings, and makes a recommendation to the Board of County Commissioners. The BOCC considers available info and the planning commission recommendation, then decides whether to adopt that recommendation or make changes to it. The BOCC's decision is sent to Ecology for review and approval.

The SMA is a cooperative partnership between local and state government. Okanogan County has the primary responsibility for initiating planning, updates, and administering the regulatory program. The Department of Ecology (Ecology) acts in a support and review role and provides assistance to make sure the SMP complies with the SMA. Ecology approves and adopts SMPs.

The primary contact for the County of Okanogan County SMP update is:

Kurt Danison, Contract Planner  
509-322-4037, [kdanison@ncidata.com](mailto:kdanison@ncidata.com)

The primary contact for the County is:

Pete Palmer, Director  
Office of Planning and Development  
509-422-7218 [spalmer@co.okanogan.wa.us](mailto:spalmer@co.okanogan.wa.us)

The Washington State Department of Ecology is responsible for providing technical assistance to the County and must approve the County's updated SMP. The primary contact person at Ecology is:

Lennard Jordan, Senior Regional Shoreline Planner  
[lennard.jordan@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:lennard.jordan@ecy.wa.gov)

The Board of County Commissioners role is to review the draft SMP update, review public input, make changes as desired, and locally adopt the final SMP, if needed.

### **What Happens at the End of the Periodic Review?**

At the end of the review, we will know whether we need to revise our SMP. The final steps will include the adoption of a resolution, motion, or ordinance following notice and a public hearing. This including, at a minimum, findings that a review and evaluation has occurred and identifying the revisions made, or that a revision was not needed and the reasons therefore.

### **What Happens If You Don't Like the SMP?**

An interested party may file an appeal with the Washington State Shorelines Hearings Board within 60 days of the publication date of the written notice of the final action.