



Shoreline Master Program (SMP) Overview

SMA and Shoreline Jurisdiction

The Washington State Legislature passed the Shoreline Management Act (SMA) in 1971 with the overarching goal of preventing shoreline degradation caused by uncoordinated development of the state's shorelines. The policies contained within it strive to foster reasonable and appropriate uses, protect natural resources, and promote public access. The SMA regulates use of "shorelines of the state," and "shorelines of statewide significance."

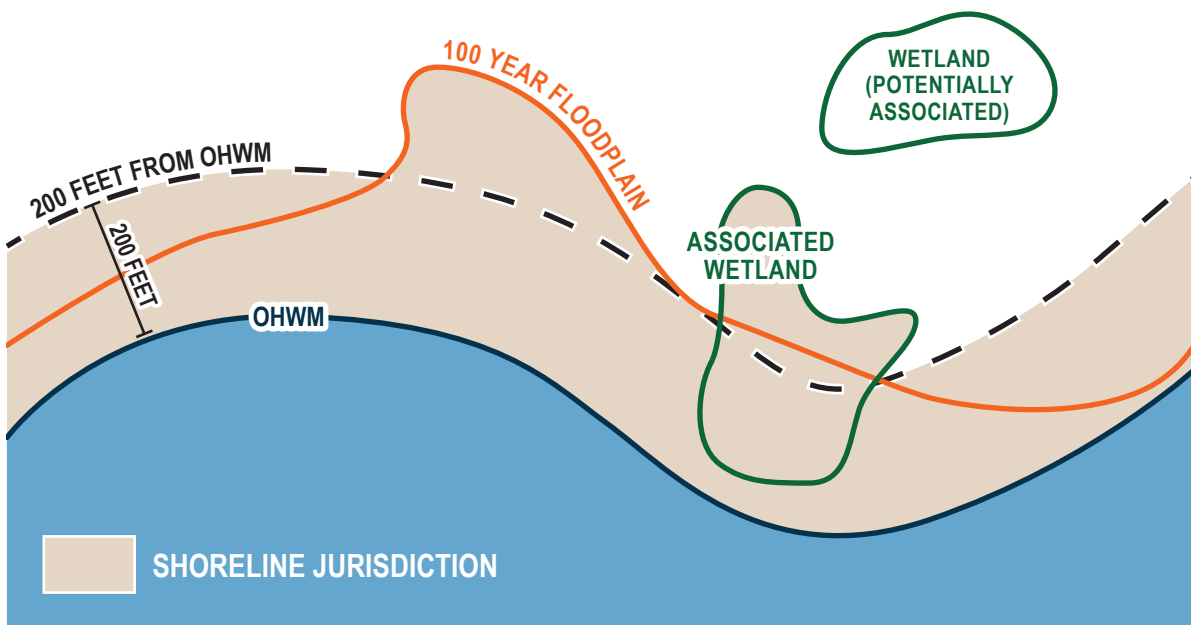
Island County's SMA regulated shorelines include all marine waters surrounding Whidbey, Camano, and other smaller islands, and lakes 20 acres or larger. There are no SMA regulated streams within the County.

Shoreline jurisdiction extends to associated upland areas. These areas, referred to as shorelands, include lands within 200 feet of the edge of shorelines, associated wetlands, and associated floodplains (see graphic below).

In compliance with the SMA, Island County developed and adopted a comprehensively updated Shoreline Master Program (SMP) to regulate uses and development activities along approximately 196 miles of Puget Sound shoreline and 11 miles of lake shoreline. The SMP is tailored to Island County – specifically designed to manage its unique marine and lake ecosystems, development patterns, and use preferences. Effective as of January 2016, the SMP includes policies and regulations consistent with State guidelines.

This guidance is developed for consultants and contractors involved with projects along shorelines within Island County. It provides tools and handouts to assist you in communicating accurate information and realistic expectations as you work with homeowners or project partners interested in shoreline development. It includes maps of Island County shoreline jurisdiction and shoreline environmental designations (see Guide centerfold); guidance for interpreting the SMP; and additional information to put Island County's SMP in context. This Guide is a quick reference and is advisory only. It should be used in conjunction with Island County SMP regulations contained in ICC 17.05A, and the goals, policies, and shoreline environment designations contained in the SMP when developing plans for a project.

Determining Shoreline Jurisdiction



Note: Because shoreline jurisdiction includes associated wetlands and floodplains, and inventory mapping of these areas has improved, some properties previously assumed to be outside of shoreline jurisdiction are now included. Where there are questions, verification of whether or not a property is within shoreline jurisdiction should be made in coordination with the County consistent with the SMP.

What Shoreline Activities are Regulated and What Permits are Required?

Island County generally requires review and approval for most regulated activity within the shoreline jurisdiction, including

- Land disturbing activities;
- New construction, and exterior alteration of existing structures;
- Shoreline stabilization (bulkheads and soft shore);
- Vegetation removal and/or management;
- Construction or repair of piers and docks;
- In water activities, including placement of mooring buoys;
- Dividing or redividing land;
- Altering regulated critical areas;
- Creating or replacing impervious surfaces; and
- Changing levels, temperatures, or chemical characteristics of wetlands or waterbodies.

Regulated activities fall under a shoreline use category, such as “single-family residential” or “non-water related commercial.” In order to be permitted, the proposed use must be allowed within the

shoreline environment within which it is proposed. Regardless of whether a shoreline permit is required, all activity within the shoreline jurisdiction must be consistent with the current SMP.

Legally-established existing uses and development, including maintenance of homes, accessory structures and yards, are allowed to continue without obtaining new permits and approvals.

Island County’s shoreline use categories common to residential shoreline development proposals are detailed on page 20 in the Shoreline Permitting Process section of this Guide. Island County reviews all proposed shoreline development activities according to SMP regulations. Shoreline permits and approvals include:

- Shoreline Exemptions;
- Shoreline Substantial Development Permits;
- Shoreline Conditional Use Permits; and
- Shoreline Variance Permits.

Shoreline permit application requirements, processes, and timelines for each type of shoreline permit are outlined in the Shoreline Permitting Process section of this Guide.



Whidbey Island: Saratoga Passage, Race Lagoon

What is New in the Updated SMP?

Many of the updates to the current SMP will have design and permitting implications for common shoreline development activities. This section highlights some important changes to the current SMP.

Shoreline Environment Designations

The updated SMP provides a new system of shoreline environmental designations (SEDs). The table on the following page summarizes the current SEDs and provides examples of each designation.

The Shoreline Residential designation includes two new sub-designations:

- Shoreline Residential – Canal Community (SRCC) and
- Shoreline Residential – Historic Beach Community (SRHBC).

These sub-designations apply to higher-density residential areas adjacent to man-made canals (SRCC) and low bank marine shorelines (SRHBC) that have historical platting and development patterns no longer allowed by zoning or the SMP. These waterfront lots are subject to the regulations for Shoreline Residential designated areas, except when regulations specifically state that a regulation applies only to these specific communities. For example, a different system of marine buffers and setbacks applies in order to provide reasonable opportunity for ongoing use and redevelopment of SRCC and SRHBC areas (see “Common Shoreline Development Scenarios – Compliance with Shoreline Buffers and Setbacks” section on page 7 for details).



Natural



Rural Conservancy



Urban Conservancy





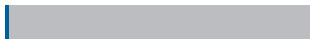


Shoreline Residential



High Intensity

Summary of Current SEDs

SED	Purpose	Percent of the Shoreline	Common Existing Land Uses
Natural	Preserve, protect, and restore areas relatively free of human influence	47% 	Public open space / conservation lands – all very low intensity uses
Rural Conservancy	Protect and manage natural resources, aesthetic, cultural, historic, and recreational areas to provide for rural residential use and recreational opportunities.	37.5% 	Low-impact outdoor recreation, timber harvesting (sustained-yield), agriculture, aquaculture, low-intensity residential
Shoreline Residential	Provide for residential development and higher impact recreational uses.	14% 	Residential, including historic beach and canal communities
Urban Conservancy	Protect and restore natural resources occurring in urban/developed settings while allowing for compatible uses.	0.5% 	Residential areas within UGAs NMUGAs (Freeland, east of Langley)
High Intensity	Provide for high intensity, water-oriented commercial, transportation, and industrial uses.	1% 	Ferry terminals; intensive use boatyards / water-dependent uses
Aquatic	Protect, restore, and manage unique characteristics / resources of areas waterward of shoreline	All areas waterward of OHMW	Shellfish aquaculture; boating facilities; water-dependent industrial and transportation facilities; shoreline modifications

Shoreline Buffers and Setbacks

In the previous SMP, the standard shoreline setback was 50 feet from the Ordinary High Water Mark (OHWM) and the required 75 feet Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Area (FWHCA) buffer was overlaid. With the updated SMP, marine and lake buffers and shoreline setbacks do not overlap, they are compounded. However, where steep slope buffers apply, they may overlap marine and shoreline buffers.

Buffers and setbacks are based on the underlying SED. Lake and marine shoreline buffers vary from 30 feet in the Shoreline Residential SED to 130 feet in the Natural SED, always measured landward from the OHWM. Shoreline setbacks range from 10 feet to 45 feet.

See details on “Compliance with Shoreline Buffers and Setbacks” within the Common Shoreline Development Scenarios section (page 7) for more information on buffers and setbacks applicable to all shoreline properties.

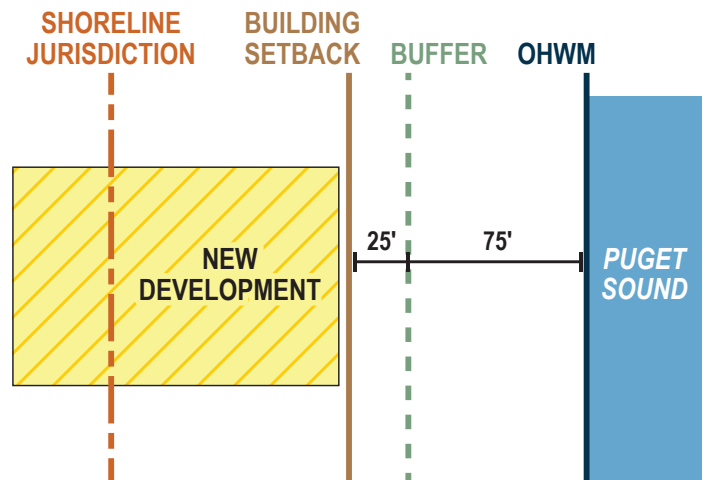
Bank Stabilization

Marine shoreline erosion is a fundamental part of normal shoreline processes. Island County has many existing, developed beaches with primary structures that are increasingly threatened by erosion, tidal action, and flooding. However, the prevention of erosion on one beach can rob a neighboring beach of sediment accumulation and impair fish and wildlife habitat. The current SMP contains policies and regulations that:

- Protect and restore natural shoreline processes as future development occurs;
- Prevent the need for future shoreline modifications for proposed structures and uses; and
- Provide a tiered shoreline stabilization approach for protection of imminently threatened existing primary structures and appurtenances.

The tiered approach requires consideration of upland measures (control of site drainage, shoreline vegetation, and relocation of structures) before shoreline modification is considered, and then requires consideration of beach nourishment and soft shore protection methods before bulkheads and other hard structures can be approved.

The current SMP (see ICC 17.05A.110 Shoreline Modification Regulations) provides additional limitations on shoreline stabilization for certain shorelines (e.g., feeder bluffs and accretion shoreforms); and additional allowances for certain shorelines (e.g., Canal Communities). See details on “Shoreline Erosion and Consideration for New Bank Stabilization” within the Common Shoreline Development Scenarios section (page 13) for more information.



Most new development, including new homes, must comply with SMP shoreline buffer and setback standards. For a marine shoreline home within the Rural Conservancy SED, a 75 foot buffer is combined with a 25 foot setback, for a total width of 100 feet. (Graphic is for illustrative purposes only; not drawn to scale.)

Modification and Maintenance of Existing Structures

Normal maintenance and repair of legally-established structures that existed prior to January 19, 2016 is allowed outright, even when such structures do not conform to the bulk and dimensional standards in the current SMP. In some instances, replacement of existing structures may be authorized as normal repair, but only when it is determined that replacement is the common method for repair, is comparable to the original structure, and does not cause substantial adverse effects to shoreline resources. In all cases, any expansion, relocation, or ground disturbance that would increase a nonconforming condition (such as the expansion of a structure in a setback, or the disturbance of a buffer) is not considered normal maintenance and repair and must adhere to standards contained in the current SMP.

This outright allowance for normal maintenance and repair does not apply to bulkheads, overwater structures, or other shoreline modifications. See “Shoreline Erosion and Consideration for Bank Stabilization” (page 13) for details.

Vegetation Management

Prior to the SMP update, vegetation removal for view enhancement and other purposes was largely allowed. Under the current SMP, removal of vegetation in shoreline jurisdiction is a “regulated activity” (defined in ICC 17.05A.070) and any removal of native vegetation is prohibited, except to the extent necessary for shoreline development. New residential development must be designed to limit vegetation removal to the greatest extent feasible.

The current SMP does provide allowances for limited tree thinning and pruning for view enhancement, to allow for pedestrian beach access, or when trees pose a threat to a primary structure or appurtenance. Tree topping is prohibited.

Bonding

The previous SMP allowed the County to require a bond or financial surety to ensure that an action (generally implementation of a landscaping plan) was successfully completed; however, County shoreline administrators rarely used this tool. The current SMP requires that all developments and uses located within the shoreline jurisdiction that require critical areas mitigation be subject to bonding and surety requirements (per ICC 17.05A.090.C). The bond or other financial surety must be equal to the cost of the mitigation or restoration action in order to ensure that it is carried out successfully, and will be refunded to the applicant upon completion of the activity, including maintenance and monitoring through the required period.

Integrated Critical Areas Standards

A key component of protecting shoreline ecological functions under the current SMP is integration of the County’s Critical Areas regulations into the SMP. The current SMP incorporates by reference specific portions of Island County critical areas protections, including ICC 17.02A for wetland protection, ICC 11.02 and ICC 11.03 for geologically hazardous areas, ICC 14.02 for frequently flooded areas and ICC 8.09.097 for aquifer recharge areas, and provides policy and regulations to protect fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas (FWHCAs) occurring within shoreline jurisdiction. See “Integrated Critical Areas Standards” section under Common Shoreline Development Scenarios (page 19) for details.



Camano Island: Port Susan, Triangle Cove

Common Shoreline Development Scenarios



This section details common shoreline development scenarios, the intent of SMP goals and policies relevant to each scenario, and direction for applicable standards.

Even with information provided here, standards of the current SMP require site specific interpretation. Prior to submitting a permit application to construct a specific development, please consult with Island County staff to determine whether a pre-application conference and/or preliminary critical areas determination (PCAD) is advised.

For permit application requirements, timelines, and a general overview of the process, please see the "Shoreline Permitting Process" guidance section contained in this pamphlet.

Compliance with Shoreline Buffers and Setbacks

All previous versions of the County's SMP have attempted to protect shoreline ecology, but prior standards were not always effective. In order to protect shoreline ecological functions and shoreline scenic quality, minimum shoreline buffers are established in the current SMP for all regulated shorelines. Shoreline buffers are measured landward in a horizontal direction perpendicular to the OHWM, and include the airspace above. In order to ensure more intensive uses are sited further back from the shoreline, and to protect human safety and general welfare, the current SMP also establishes shoreline setbacks. Shoreline setbacks are provided in addition to shoreline buffers (i.e., a 25 foot setback is added to a 75 foot buffer, for a total width of 100 feet).

Ecological Importance of Shoreline Buffers and SMP Intent

Shoreline buffers provide multiple ecological benefits, many of which also improve shoreline quality and safety for humans. Buffers filter polluted run-off, help stabilize shoreline slopes and banks, and provide organic material to terrestrial and aquatic food-webs. Buffers also provide shade and habitat for critical fish and wildlife species.

The current SMP recognizes that all waters and shorelines of the Puget Sound, and many of the other shorelines within the County, provide important habitat and ecological functions. The SMP includes policies, a system of SEDs, and appropriate buffer and setback standards to protect these areas. Policies for shoreline conservation,

environmental protection, water quality, and for specific uses all provide the basis for establishing minimum buffers and setbacks by SED that protect against a net loss of ecological functions, recognizing both the types of habitat present and the degree of existing development.

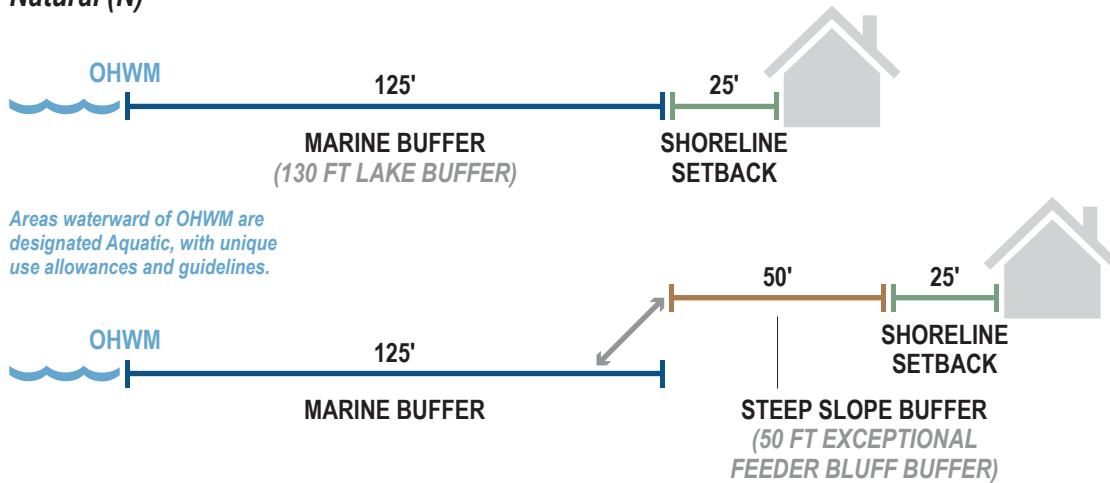
Relevant Regulations

The current SMP establishes a system of buffers and setbacks for each SED (ICC 17.05A.090.D. - Table 3. Minimum Shoreline Buffers, Setbacks, Lot Widths, & Maximum Impervious Surface Limits). A setback is measured landward from the landward-most edge of the buffer. Buffer widths, measured landward from OHWM, are provided for shorelines and steep slopes occurring along marine shorelines (measured landward from the top of the slope). The following graphics illustrate the minimum shoreline buffers and setbacks for all SEDs.

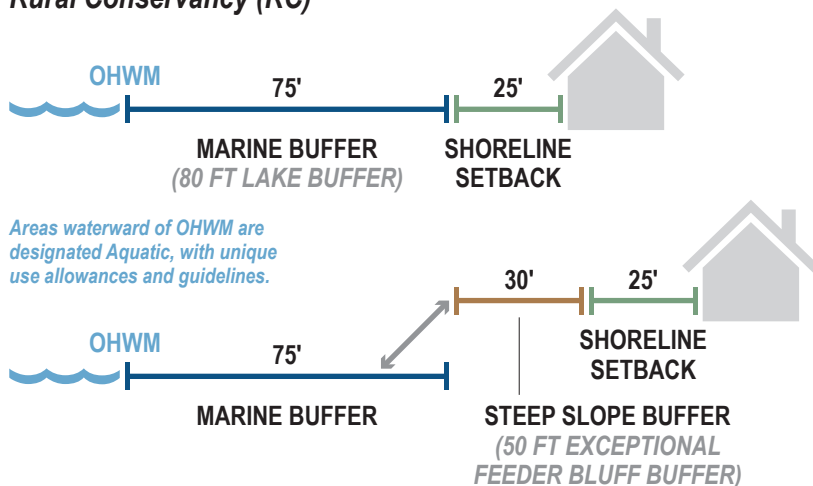
If buffers for any shoreline or critical areas are contiguous or overlapping, the buffers and setbacks that are most protective of shoreline resources apply.

Residential development, including principal structures and all associated impervious surfaces, must be placed landward of the shoreline buffer plus the building setback, except for limited allowances as described in the SMP, or with the approval of a shoreline variance.

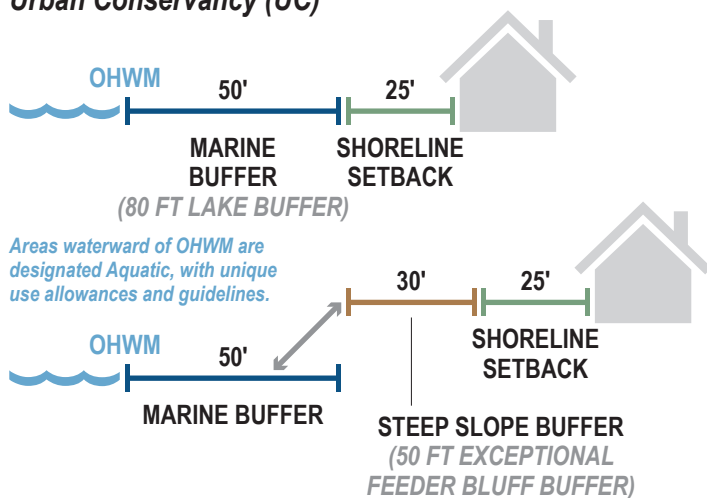
Natural (N)



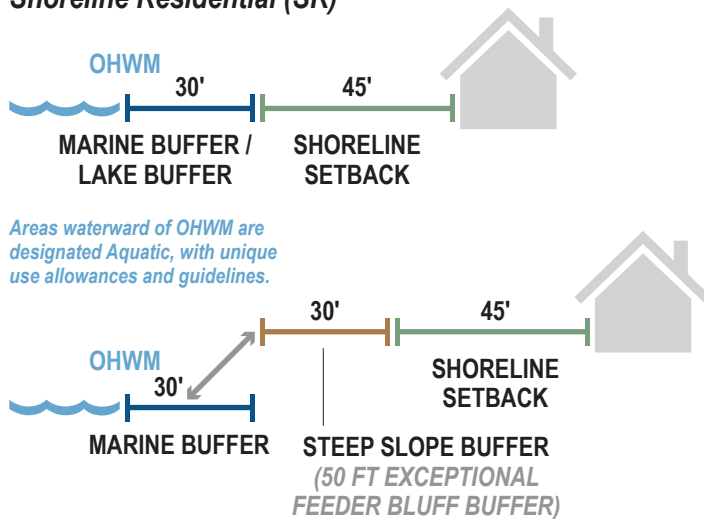
Rural Conservancy (RC)



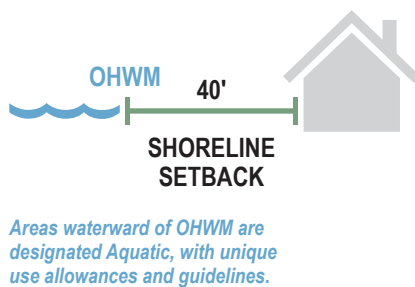
Urban Conservancy (UC)



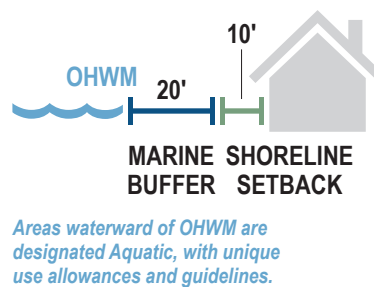
Shoreline Residential (SR)



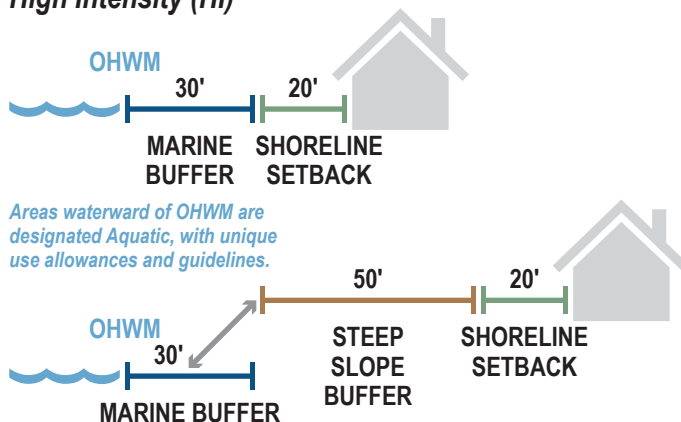
Canal Community (SRCC)



Historic Beach Community (SRHBC)



High Intensity (HI)



These drawings are for illustrative purposes only; please check with Planning staff to determine the exact buffers and setbacks for your property.

When is development allowed in a shoreline setback?

Upon approval from Island County, the following residential development may be allowed in the shoreline setback without a shoreline variance:

- 1) Impervious surfaces that do not cover more than 20% of the building setback area;
- 2) Structures less than 30" in height;
- 3) A single garden or storage structure over 30" in height as an accessory to a single-family home (limited to 200 square feet and a maximum height of 12'); and
- 4) Other structures, but only when:
 - The area of the lot outside of the standard shoreline buffer and building setback, side setbacks, and any required critical area buffer is less than 2,200 square feet;
 - The building footprint (including principal structures and all associated impervious surfaces) are no larger than 2,200 square feet;
 - There is no opportunity to consolidate lots under common ownership that will alleviate the nonconformity;
 - The proposed development has utilized the maximum portion of the lot outside of the shoreline buffer, building setback, critical areas, and critical area buffers before extending into the building setback; and
 - Buffer enhancement is provided consistent with SMP requirements.

When can shoreline setbacks be modified?

A legally established residential structure may expand into the building setback provided:

- The maximum building footprint (including principal structures and all associated impervious surfaces) is not larger than 2,200 square feet;
- There is no opportunity to consolidate lots under common ownership that will alleviate the nonconformity;
- The proposed development has utilized the maximum portion of the lot outside of the shoreline buffer, building setback, critical areas, and critical area buffers before extending into the building setback; and
- Buffer enhancement is provided consistent with the SMP.

When can shoreline buffers be modified?

Upon approval from Island County, shoreline buffers may be modified to include:

- 1) A trail up to five feet in width that is the minimum length necessary to provide access to the shoreline.
- 2) Beach access structures, as described in the beach access structures section of this handbook and in the IC SMP.

What other rules apply to shoreline buffers and setbacks?

The complete list of rules for shoreline buffers and setbacks can be found in ICC 17.05A. Here are some of the most common issues that need to be considered:

- A legally established residential structure (including principal structures and all associated impervious surfaces) in the shoreline buffer or building setback may be replaced in the same location as the original structure if required buffer enhancement is provided.
- Structures must be located in the least environmentally damaging location relative to the shoreline and any critical areas.
- Residences must be located outside of areas subject to geologic hazards.
- With a reduced setback or buffer, the proposed structure will not require shoreline stabilization for the life of the structure.
- Septic drainfields are to be located landward of the single-family residence, whenever possible, in compliance with Island County Health regulations.
- Measures must be taken to mitigate all adverse impacts, including using low impact development measures where appropriate, such as pervious pavement for driveways and other hard surfaces and infiltrating stormwater runoff through bioswales except where this would threaten slope stability, increase erosion, or potentially degrade groundwater quality.

When can shoreline buffers and setbacks be reduced?

The Common Line method can be used to reduce setbacks and buffers for single-family homes where legally-established homes are on lots directly adjacent to and within 100 feet of the project site and at least partially waterward of the required shoreline buffer or building setback. In such cases, a single-family residence may be constructed at the common line drawn between the water-side corners of the facades of each adjacent house that is nearest to the proposed structure. If the common line setback allows the placement of a residential structure in the shoreline buffer, the area of the buffer

cannot be reduced by more than 50%. If the common line setback allows the placement or expansion of a home in the shoreline buffer or building setback, the applicant must enhance the remaining buffer consistent with the SMP.

Buffer and setback reduction provisions may never be used to reduce a steep slope buffer. This is because steep slope buffers are the minimum required to ensure the stability of the structure over the life of the structure.

Diagram of Common Line method for proposed house adjacent to existing non-conforming houses on both sides.

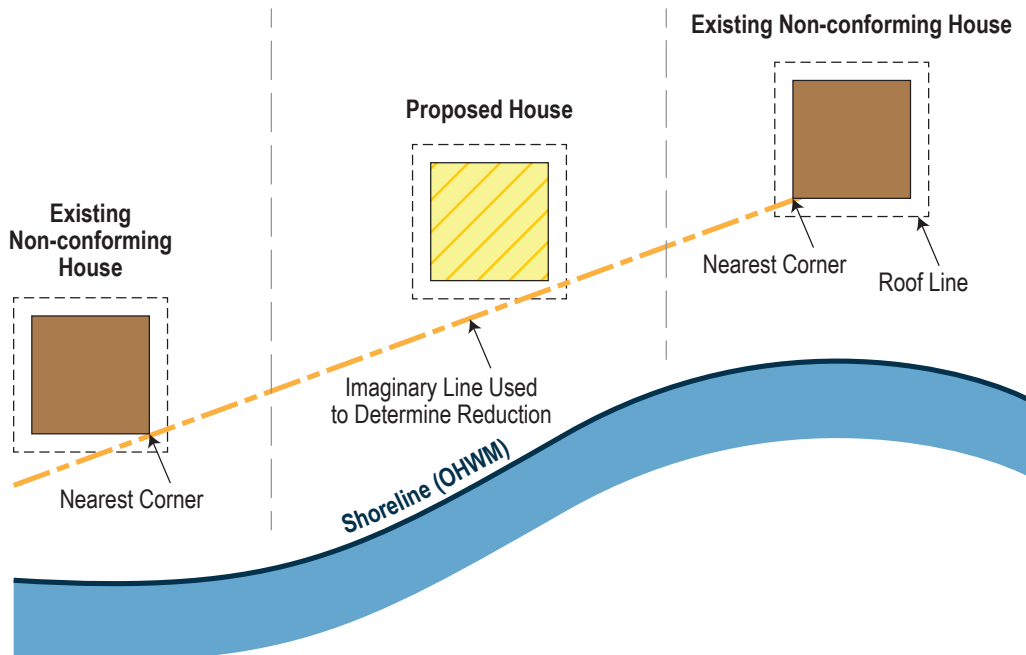
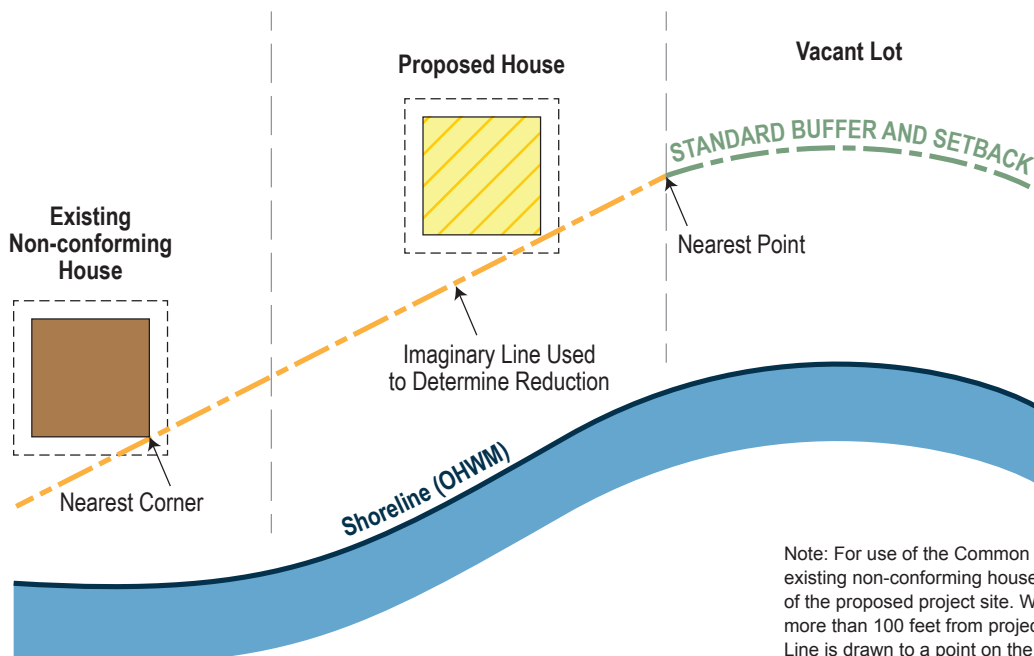


Diagram of Common Line method for proposed house adjacent to existing non-conforming house on one side and no house within 100 feet on other side.



Note: For use of the Common Line method, adjacent existing non-conforming houses must be within 100 feet of the proposed project site. When the adjacent SFR is more than 100 feet from project site, then the Common Line is drawn to a point on the shared property line that reflects the buffer and setback for that SED.

Beach Access Structures

Beach access structures are, in many ways, at the nexus of the SMA's three primary goals of fostering reasonable and appropriate uses of the State's shorelines, protecting natural resources, and promoting public access. The SMP promotes public access and provides rules for structures needed in order to facilitate public access. The SMP also recognizes that private landowners want to enjoy beach access on their properties, and allows for private beach access structures in certain circumstances.

Ecological Importance and SMP Intent

Beach access structures inherently require some modification of shoreline riparian vegetation and the associated habitat and ecological functions provided. Policies contained in the current SMP reflect SMA's overarching guidance by including provisions for beach access structures where:

- Public safety is promoted;
- Normal shoreline ecological functions are not compromised (including retaining vegetation, providing for normal sediment transport, and prohibiting bulkheading in association with beach access structures); and
- Cumulative impacts are avoided or mitigated.

Relevant Regulations

Are Beach Access Structures Permitted?

Beach access structures are generally permitted; however, some SEDs require a shoreline conditional use permit (S-CUP). Like other permitted uses, beach access structures must meet all limitations, exceptions, and conditions contained in the SMP for the shoreline use and the permit type.

The permitted uses table common to residential developments (page 20) details when beach access structures that are accessory to a residential use are allowed. Note: Beach access structures that are not accessory to a residential use would be classified consistent with their primary shoreline use (i.e. commercial, recreational, etc.).

What are general limitations, exceptions, and conditions for new beach access structures?

Beach access structures are never allowed on exceptional feeder bluffs, or on Natural SED shorelines with banks lower than 10 feet in height (instead, beach access for homes may be provided by means of a low impact trail). For Natural SED shorelines bluffs larger than 10 feet in height, beach access structures may only be permitted for public access and for new subdivisions when the structure would provide public access.



All allowed beach access structures must be located, designed and operated to avoid critical areas and net loss of shoreline ecological functions and processes. This means associated construction is generally prohibited waterward of the OHWM, and that proposals should not require shoreline stabilization. The proposal should not increase landslide or erosion hazards, or interfere with natural erosion and accretion processes. Evaluation and mitigation for impacts to habitat, slope stability, sediment transport and water quality should be provided.

When allowed, beach access structures may be located within the shoreline buffer only when:

- No other available public beach access is nearby;
- The proposal provides access to a publicly-owned beach or where the applicant has rights of access to the adjoining tidelands;
- The size is the minimum necessary to provide access, and
- Adequate geotechnical and biological analysis must be provided to Island County to determine whether the structure meets all standards.

Can an existing beach access structure be maintained, even if it doesn't meet the design standards of the current SMP?

Existing lawfully constructed, nonconforming beach access structures may be repaired or replaced in-kind. The work requires a shoreline permit.

Shoreline Erosion and Consideration for New Bank Stabilization

Ecological Importance and SMP Intent

Shoreline erosion is an integral part of normal shoreline processes, and the prevention of erosion on one beach can rob other beaches of sediment and fish habitat. At the same time, Island County has many existing built-up beachfronts containing primary structures that are increasingly threatened by erosion, tidal action, and flooding. The current SMP contains policies and regulations that protect and restore natural shoreline processes; provide a tiered shoreline stabilization approach for protection of imminently threatened existing primary structures and appurtenances (starting with softshore methods); and prevent the need for future shoreline modifications for proposed structures and uses.

Relevant Regulations

Shoreline stabilization is defined as structures or modifications for the purpose of retarding shore erosion from wave or current action, protecting channels and harbors from wave action, encouraging deposition of beach materials, or preventing shoreline overflow and retaining uplands. It includes bulkheads, seawalls, dikes, revetments, breakwaters, jetties, groins, gabions, large woody material placement, beach nourishment, vegetation enhancement, biotechnical methods, or similar structures or modifications.



Where actions to address shoreline erosion are warranted, the current SMP prioritizes approaches with the least shoreline impact over those with greater levels of impact. This requires consideration of upland measures (control of site drainage, shoreline vegetation, and relocation of structures) before shoreline modification is considered, and then requires consideration

of beach nourishment and soft shore protection methods before bulkheads and other hard structures can be approved. These Puget Sound property owners chose to remove an ineffective riprap bulkhead, and instead used beach nourishment to stabilize the beach. This soft shore protection approach also improved access to the beach. (These images are from the WDFW "Your Marine Waterfront" guide.)



Photos: Hugh Shipman



Shoreline Jurisdiction includes:

- **Marine waters surrounding eight islands:** Whidbey, Camano, Baby, Ben Ure, Deception, Minor, Smith, Strawberry;
- **Coastal lagoons:** Admiral's, Bush Point, Crockett, Deer, Harrington, Kennedy's, Lake Hancock, Perego's, Race, Swan Lake, Twin; and
- **Fresh water lakes:** Cranberry, Deer, Dugualla, Goss, Kristoferson, and Lone.

The SMP applies a system of Shoreline Environment Designations that establish allowed uses and standards to manage the varied conditions that occur across the County's shorelines and to achieve the SMP's overall purpose and goals.

When can shoreline stabilization be permitted?

Shoreline stabilization is only permitted when a geotechnical analysis and a biological site assessment are provided that confirm:

- Erosion creating the need for shoreline stabilization is not caused by upland conditions on the project site, such as the loss of vegetation or modification of drainage;
- Proposed shoreline stabilization is designed to minimize interruption of fish and wildlife habitats through the use of the least impacting alternative type of shoreline stabilization practicable. The current SMP provides a list of alternatives that must be considered (in order of priority from least to greatest impact). This approach requires consideration of upland measures (control of site drainage, shoreline vegetation, and relocation of structures) before shoreline modification is considered, and then requires consideration of beach nourishment and soft shore protection methods before bulkheads and other hard structures can be approved;
- Proposed shoreline stabilization will minimize interference with hydrological and geomorphological processes normally acting in natural conditions;
- Adequate mitigation measures will be provided to maintain existing shoreline processes and critical fish and wildlife habitat, and ensure no net loss of ecological functions; and
- Shoreline stabilization will not be used for the direct or indirect purpose of creating land waterward of the OHWM.

What does the current SMP say about replacement of existing shoreline stabilization?

Proposals for replacement of existing shoreline stabilization must generally document the need for replacement consistent with standards for newly proposed stabilization. This means that the stabilization must be needed to protect principal uses or structures (including wastewater disposal systems) from erosion caused by currents, tidal action or waves, and that replacement design is provided to ensure no net loss of ecological functions.

Special requirements apply for replacing existing shoreline stabilization in Canal Communities, including that the shoreline stabilization structure must be aligned horizontally with the predominant line formed by other bulkheads on the same shoreline; and aligned vertically with the predominant height of other bulkheads on the same shoreline.

New or expanded shoreline stabilization

New and expanded shoreline stabilization is generally discouraged. New or expanded structures may be permitted under the following circumstances:

- Where necessary to support a project with the primary purpose of enhancing or restoring ecological functions;
- Where necessary to protect a water-dependent use and other options are infeasible;
- On a lot within a designated canal community where the adjacent lots on both sides have a legally established bulkhead, under some circumstances; and
- A geotechnical study demonstrates that erosion from waves or currents (not landslides, sloughing or other forms of shoreline erosion unrelated to water action) is expected to cause damage to a primary structure or appurtenance within three years if the shoreline stabilization is not constructed.

Before a permit can be issued, the following must be demonstrated:

- The shoreline stabilization proposal is the minimum needed to protect the primary structure or appurtenance;
- Nonstructural measures, planting vegetation, or installing on-site drainage improvements are not feasible or not sufficient;
- The shoreline stabilization complies with flood damage prevention regulations;
- Adverse shoreline impacts are fully mitigated; and
- The primary structure or appurtenance will be damaged within three years, or waiting until the need is so immediate that it would foreclose the opportunity to use measures that avoid impacts on ecological functions.

Prohibitions and limitations on new shoreline stabilization

- New development that would require shoreline stabilization which causes significant impacts to adjacent or down-current properties and shoreline areas is prohibited.
- On marine feeder bluffs, shoreline stabilization may be permitted only when it is demonstrated by a professional engineer or geologist that construction will not substantially disrupt the beach feeding action or littoral drift.
- Shoreline stabilization is prohibited for the purposes of leveling or extending property or creating or preserving residential lawns, yards, or landscaping.
- Construction of shoreline stabilization to protect a platted lot where no primary use or structure presently exists is generally prohibited.
- Public access is required, where feasible, as part of any shoreline stabilization construction or replacement project on public land or using public funds.
- Shoreline stabilization is prohibited in or adjacent to lakes, and

is not permitted on hooks, spits, bars, barrier beaches, or similar accretion terminals or accretion shoreforms, except when demonstrated that construction of the above shore defense devices are absolutely necessary for the protection of existing primary structures and appurtenances.

- Stabilization that would cause significant impacts to adjacent or downcurrent properties and shoreline areas is prohibited.

The applicant or applicant's agent should always confirm site-specific permit requirements with Island County staff prior to beginning any construction.

Modification and Maintenance of Existing Structures

Ecological Importance

Many structures along Island County's shoreline existed prior to adoption of the current SMP, and may not conform to new standards for protection of the natural shoreline environment. Some of these non-conforming structures may also be vulnerable to shoreline hazards, such as flooding and erosion. In order to ensure that vegetation, critical areas, and natural erosion and accretion processes are not negatively impacted, new regulations allow legally-established, existing structures to remain in their current location, but require review under current SMP guidance for structural expansion.

Relevant Regulations

Existing, legally-established residential and appurtenant structures (excluding bulkheads, overwater structures, or other shoreline modifications) that do not conform to updated IC SMP standards for setbacks, buffers, area, bulk, height, or density, are considered nonconforming development (in other words, they are "grandfathered" to preexisting regulations). The SMP allows for regular repair and maintenance, including limited like-for-like, in-kind remodels, but the work may require a shoreline permit. All new residential development, including expansions of grandfathered structures and uses within the shoreline jurisdiction, must adhere to current SMP requirements.

Uses other than residential that were legally established and are nonconforming to current SMP use regulations may continue as legal nonconforming ("grandfathered") uses. The uses may not be enlarged or expanded, except that nonconforming single-family residences that are located landward of the OHWM may be enlarged or expanded in conformance with applicable bulk and dimensional standards by the addition of space to the main structure or by the addition of normal appurtenances as defined in the SMP upon approval of a shoreline permit.

A nonconforming structure that is moved any distance must be brought into conformance with the SMP to the maximum extent feasible.

If a nonconforming development is unintentionally damaged to an extent not exceeding 75% of its real valuation (not including foundations), it may be reconstructed to its configuration existing immediately prior to the time the structure was damaged; however, all permit appli-

New SMP standards for replacement of an existing structure/development:

Replacement will usually be authorized as repair where such replacement is the common method of repair for the type of structure or development and the replacement structure or development is comparable to the original structure or development (size, shape, configuration, location, and external appearance) and the replacement does not cause substantial adverse effects to the shoreline environment. As part of replacement, relocation and reconfiguration of the structure/development may be performed within a property if there is a measurable and sustainable ecological improvement (ICC 17.05A.130.F.2).

Replacement of shoreline stabilization, docks, piers, and other shoreline modifications must comply within additional criteria in ICC 17.05A.110.

cations necessary to restore the structure must be made within one year of the date the damage occurred, and all necessary permits must be obtained and the restoration must be completed within two years of permit issuance.

If a nonconforming structure is intentionally modified and the cost of the proposed development exceeds 60% of the fair market value of the replacement cost of the original structure, it shall be required to meet all applicable standards in the SMP.

An undeveloped lot, tract, parcel, site, or division of land located landward of the OHWM which was established prior to the current SMP but which does not conform to the present lot size standards, may be developed if permitted by other land use regulations so long as the development conforms to all other SMP standards.

Vegetation Management

Ecological Importance and SMP Intent

Native shoreline vegetation serves important functions within the shoreline ecosystem and benefit shoreline users, including supporting the fish and wildlife habitat, stabilizing soils, and improving water quality. The SMP includes standards for native vegetation protection and enhancement within the shoreline jurisdiction.

The Island County SMP shoreline vegetation requirements dictate that native plant species should dominate shoreline vegetation and be maintained throughout shoreline jurisdiction to the greatest extent feasible as new development occurs.

Relevant Regulations

The current SMP contains shoreline vegetation conservation requirements. Overall, these standards are intended to support the following actions:

- Conserve and restore native plant species and eradicate non-native invasive weeds;
- Accommodate development but limit the removal of native vegetation;
- Create well-vegetated shorelines and minimize clearings;
- Minimize the use of chemicals such as pesticides, herbicides and fertilizers; and
- Enhance native woody vegetation and groundcovers to stabilize soils and provide habitat.

The SMP promotes and regulates native vegetation within shoreline jurisdiction in order to maintain and restore natural shoreline functions, including protection of habitat and shoreline bluffs:

- Unless otherwise specified, all shoreline use and development shall comply with the SMP buffer provisions to protect and maintain shoreline vegetation and habitat (17.05A.090.K.1).
- Removal of native vegetation shall be avoided, where feasible, and should replace non-native vegetation when it is removed (17.05A.090.K.2).
- Restoration and enhancement projects should use native plants that are similar to the natural, unaltered shoreline vegetation in size, structure, and diversity (17.05A.090.K.3).



Consistent with policy in the SMP, the County encourages the use of native plants throughout your shoreline property. Native plants provide a low-maintenance alternative to ornamental plantings, and can be integrated with the natural landscape and active-use areas of your yard to be aesthetically pleasing. Native plants will improve water quality, stabilize soils, and attract wildlife, all while being more resilient to molds and fungus that come with wet Northwest winters and drought periods during summer.

To provide your shoreline homeowner clients with more direction for choosing native plants for their yards, see *Island County Shore Stewards' Guide for Shoreline Living*, WDFW's *Your Marine Waterfront guide*, and plant sales, classes, field trips, and online resources provided by The Washington Native Plant Society.

- Natural features such as snags, stumps, logs, drift logs, or uprooted trees shall be left undisturbed to support fish and other aquatic systems, except where they are a hazard to navigational safety or human health (17.05A.090.K.4);
- Topping trees is prohibited. Selective pruning or thinning for safety, view protection, or maintenance may be allowed with the following limitations (17.05A.090.K.6 & 17.05A.090.K.7);
- Pruning may not affect ecological functions. No more than 25% of the canopy of any tree or group of trees, no more than 20% of a tree's limbs, and no more than 20% of the canopy cover in a stand of trees may be removed in a given five-year period, as determined by a certified arborist. Pruning shall comply with the National Arborist Association pruning standards, unless the tree is a hazard tree as certified by an arborist and approved by the Shoreline Administrator.
- The Shoreline Administrator may deny a request for vegetative view maintenance if it the action negatively affects slope stability, habitat value, health of surrounding vegetation, risk of wind damage to surrounding vegetation, nearby surface or ground water; or water quality of a nearby water body (17.05A.090.K.8).

Integrated Critical Areas Standards

Ecological Importance and SMP Intent

Within shoreline jurisdiction, many natural functions and areas most important for maintaining functions and providing habitat occur as critical areas. For example, shoreline feeder bluffs are included as geologically hazardous areas, numerous coastal streams are protected as FWHCAs, and coastal lagoons are protected as high value wetlands. Protection of these resources within shoreline jurisdiction is necessary to meet the SMA policy objective of protecting environmental resources and achieving no net loss of shoreline ecological functions.

In order to meet no net loss requirements of the SMA, the current SMP includes protection and enhancement of natural shoreline systems and critical areas as a primary purpose, with corresponding policies and regulations to ensure that wetlands, FWHCAs, geologically hazardous areas, frequently flooded areas, and critical aquifer recharge areas are protected where they occur in shoreline jurisdiction.

Relevant Regulations

The current SMP incorporates by reference specific portions of Island County critical areas protections, including ICC 17.02A for wetland protection, ICC 11.02 and ICC 11.03 for geologically hazardous areas, ICC 14.02 for frequently flooded areas and ICC 8.09.097 for aquifer recharge areas. Current SMP policies and regulations also incorporate new protections for fish and wildlife habitat conservation areas (FWHCAs) occurring within shoreline jurisdiction, including standards for streams and critical saltwater habitats.

In the event development or performance standards in integrated critical areas regulations are inconsistent with the current SMP, the standard that is more protective of natural resources in the shoreline will apply.

Administrative provisions, including permit requirements, of the SMP supersede critical areas approvals that apply outside of shoreline jurisdiction. Additionally, critical areas exceptions, appeal procedures, and enforcement standards do not apply within shoreline jurisdiction.



Admiralty Inlet, Whidbey Island

Shoreline Permitting Process

When is a Shoreline Permit Required?

Legally established existing uses and structures, even if located within current buffers or setbacks, may continue to exist without obtaining new permits or approvals, as long as no new development or change of use occurs. Generally, when development activity is proposed in the shoreline jurisdiction, review of the proposed project against SMP policies and regulations is required and a shoreline permit must be obtained. Other environmental reviews and approvals, such as State Environmental Protection Act (SEPA), are often also required prior to commencement of development activities.

What Common Residential Activities are Permitted?

The following table reflects permitted, prohibited, and conditional uses common to residential shoreline development proposals for each SED. This table is a consolidated version of the Shoreline Use Classification Table within the SMP (ICC 17.05A Table 1).

Summary of Current SEDs

P = Shoreline Permitted Use

X = Shoreline Prohibited Use

C = Shoreline Conditional Use

SHORELINE USE / STRUCTURE	SHORELINE ENVIRONMENT DESIGNATION (SED)					
	Aquatic	Natural	Rural Conservancy	Urban Conservancy	Shoreline Residential	High Intensity
Residential Uses						
Single-family (and normal appurtenances)	X	C	P	P	P	C
Accessory dwelling units (e.g., guest houses)	X	C	C	P	P	X
Accessory beach access structures on private lots	C	P ¹ / C	P	P	P	C
Accessory structures (e.g., garden house, boat house, etc.)	X	C	P	P	P	C
Boating & Related Facilities						
Boat launches	P ² / C	C ²	C ²	C ²	P ² / C	P
Private piers and docks	C	C	C	C	C / P ¹	P
Mooring buoys	P	NA	NA	NA	NA	X
Shoreline Modification						
Structural stabilization	C	C	C	P	P	P
Non-structural stabilization	P	P	P	P	P	P
Restoration/beach enhancement	P	P	P	P	P	P

Table Notes:

1: Permitted use only for public access over private lots, including required public access for a subdivision. All other beach access structures in the Natural designation require a conditional use permit.

2: Public boat launches only.

What are Island County's Shoreline Permit Types?

Shoreline Exemption Permit

Shoreline Exemption Permits apply to permitted structures and uses that require SMP review and approval, where the total cost or fair market value of the new structure or development does not exceed the threshold for a shoreline substantial development permit. Proposed activities generally include normal maintenance and repair of existing structures, new single-family residences located outside of shoreline buffers and setbacks, and low-impact, low-cost modifications.

Island County has two shoreline exemption permit types: a standard Shoreline Exemption (SHE), and a Shoreline Exemption Limited Review (SHE-LR) that allows for expedited permit processing. In order for a project to qualify as a SHE-LR, it must:

- Qualify as a ministerial decision that requires little or no discretion on the part of staff;
- Demonstrate that the original use or structure was legally established, if necessary; and
- Not be located within a wetland, stream, critical drainage area, flood hazard area, steep slope, geologically hazardous area, or habitat of local importance (or a buffer associated with any of these critical areas). EXCEPTION: Projects within a Marine Fish & Wildlife Habitat Conservation Area (MFWHCA) can also be included.

In addition, only the following types of work might qualify for a Shoreline Exemption Limited Review:

- Repair and maintenance of a deck, gazebo, minor septic component (other than drainfield), carport, shed, greenhouse or other minor accessory structure;
- Like-for-like replacement of an existing, legally established and permitted structure (no change in size, shape, location, or configuration);
- Small additions to the landward side of a residence when the proposed addition is outside of all buffers and setbacks;
- Repair and maintenance of minor septic system components (other than drainfield);
- Like-for-like replacement of minor septic system components (other than drainfield); and/or
- Other, upon staff approval prior to submittal. Note: septic drainfield work does not qualify for limited review.

If the limited review project is within the vicinity of an archaeological site, the application will be sent to the Washington State Department of Archaeological and Historic Preservation (DAHP) for review and approval prior to issuance of the shoreline permit.

Shoreline Substantial Development Permit

Shoreline Substantial Development Permits (SDPs) apply to non-exempt uses that are permitted where the total cost of the project exceeds \$6,416.00. This dollar threshold, set in 2012, is updated every five years by the State Office of Financial Management and is subject to change. Project cost is determined by fair market value.

Shoreline Conditional Use Permit

The purpose of a Shoreline Conditional Use permit (S-CUP) is to allow a range of shoreline uses while preventing undesirable effects of the proposed use and ensuring consistency with local and state shoreline regulations.

S-CUPs are required when the proposed use is classified as a conditional use in Island County SMP's Shoreline Use Classification Table (see consolidated Table on page 20), or if the proposed use is an unspecified use, in which case the proposal requires a S-CUP. Approval will only be granted when the proposed use:

- Is consistent with shoreline management policies;
- Will not interfere with the normal public use of public shorelines;
- Site, and design of the project is compatible with other authorized uses within and planned for the area;
- Will cause no significant adverse effects to the shoreline environment in which it is to be located; and
- And its contribution to cumulative shoreline impacts will not cause significant public detriment.

S-CUP applications must be reviewed and approved by Island County and Ecology prior to commencement of development activities and may also require SDP approval. After approval by Island County and completion of the 14-day appeal process, the decision is sent to Ecology for review and approval. Following Ecology approval and completion of the 21-day appeal period, the applicant may then begin development activity given that all other necessary permits have been obtained.

Shoreline Variance Permit

Shoreline Variance Permits (S-VARs) are required when a project proposal exceeds allowed height limits, encroaches into required setbacks and buffers, or varies from any other specific bulk, dimensional, or performance standards required by the SMP. Variances from SMP use regulations are never allowed.

S-VARs are granted only under extenuating circumstances and upon verification of strict criteria. All S-VAR applications must include a site plan that clearly indicates where development could occur without variance approval, the physical features and circumstances on the property that provide a basis for the request, and the location of adjacent structures and uses. In addition, S-VAR approvals are only granted when the following are demonstrated:

- Strict application of the bulk, dimensional, or performance standards set forth in the SMP is not possible without causing serious hardship;
- The hardship is specifically related to the property and is the result of unique property conditions and the application of the SMP (not caused by deed restrictions or the applicant's own actions);
- The project is compatible with other surrounding permitted activities and the SMP;
- The project will not cause adverse impacts to the shoreline environment;

- The variance requested is the minimum necessary to afford relief and will not constitute a grant of special privilege not enjoyed by other properties in the area;
- Public interest will suffer no substantial detrimental effect; and
- The cumulative impact of the proposed variance and similar variances in the area are consistent with shoreline regulations.

S-VAR applications must be reviewed and approved by Island County and Ecology prior to commencement of development activities and may also require SDP approval. After approval by Island County and the local 14-day appeal process, the decision is sent to Ecology for review and approval. Following Ecology approval and completion of the 21-day appeal period, the applicant may begin development activity given that all other necessary permits and approvals have been obtained.

A number of factors can impact the type of permit and other approvals necessary to proceed with a development proposal, including the proposed use, it shoreline designation, project design, and site conditions. The following shoreline use classification table reflects the allowed, prohibited, and conditional uses in each of Island County's shoreline designations. Uses that are specifically prohibited cannot be approved, and all allowed uses are subject to the limitations, conditions and exceptions contained in the SMP.

What needs to be included in my Application Packet?

Island County provides all applications and submittal forms necessary to submit a complete application at the Island County Planning and Community Development Offices, or on their website at <https://www.islandcountywa.gov/planning/>.

It's important to ensure that all required items and copies are included in the submittal packet, since Island County cannot accept an incomplete permit submittal. SDPs, S-VARs, and S-CUPs must contain the following, at a minimum.

- 1) Name, address and phone number of the applicant (the owner of the property or the primary proponent of the project; not the representative of the owner or representative of the primary proponent);
- 2) Name, address and phone number of the applicant's representative, if other than the applicant;
- 3) Name, address and phone number of the property owner, if other than the applicant;
- 4) Location of the property, including property address and identification of the section, township and range to the nearest quarter, quarter section or latitude and longitude to the nearest minute. In-water projects shall provide a longitude and latitude location;
- 5) Identification of the name of the shoreline (water body) that triggers SMP review;
- 6) General description of the proposed project, including proposed use(s) and activities necessary to accomplish the project;
- 7) General description of the property as it now exists, including its physical characteristics, improvements, and structures;

- 8) Site development plan consisting of maps and elevation drawings, drawn to standard engineering scale to clearly depict:
- a) Parcel boundaries;
 - b) The OHWM of all water bodies located adjacent to /within the boundary of the project (where not adjacent or within the project boundary, indicate the distance and direction to the nearest OHWM of a shoreline);
 - c) Top and toe of any steep slope;
 - d) A delineation of all wetland areas and buffers on the subject parcel;
 - e) A general indication of the character of vegetation found on the site;
 - f) The dimensions and locations of all existing and proposed structures and improvements (buildings; paved or graveled areas; roads; utilities; septic tanks and drainfields; material stockpiles or surcharge; and stormwater management facilities, etc.);
 - g) A landscaping plan (where applicable) consistent with SMP requirements;
 - h) On- or off-site mitigation plans for impacts associated with the proposed project (where applicable);
 - i) Quantity, source, and composition of any fill material that is placed on the site, whether temporary or permanent;
 - j) Quantity, composition, and destination of any excavated or dredged material;
 - k) A vicinity map (showing relationship to roads, utilities, existing developments, and uses on adjacent properties);
 - l) A depiction of view impacts from existing residential uses and public areas (where applicable).
- 9) In addition, some projects require submittal of technical reports or other supplements. The table below illustrates technical report requirements for specific shoreline activities.

ACTIVITY	TYPE OF REPORT					
	Geotechnical Report	Archaeological Report	Monitoring Report	Biological Site Assessment (BSA)	Habitat Management Plan	Arborist Report
Beach Access Structure	✓			✓		
Bulkead	✓			✓		
Ground disturbance in an archaeological site		✓				
Tree removal, limbing, pruning						✓
Work within a geologically hazardous area	✓					
Work adjacent to marine waters, associated wetlands, and FWHCA buffers				✓		
Work affecting a protected habitat, as identified by a BSA					✓	

How Long Does a Shoreline Permit Take, and What Are the Review Steps?

The type of permit and approvals necessary to proceed with the development proposal can have a significant impact on permit processing timelines and fees. Therefore, prior to submitting a permit application, it is important to identify property owners' priorities regarding timeline, finances, and site design. Additionally, permit approval may not be granted if the use or other aspects of the application are found to be inconsistent with SMP guidance.

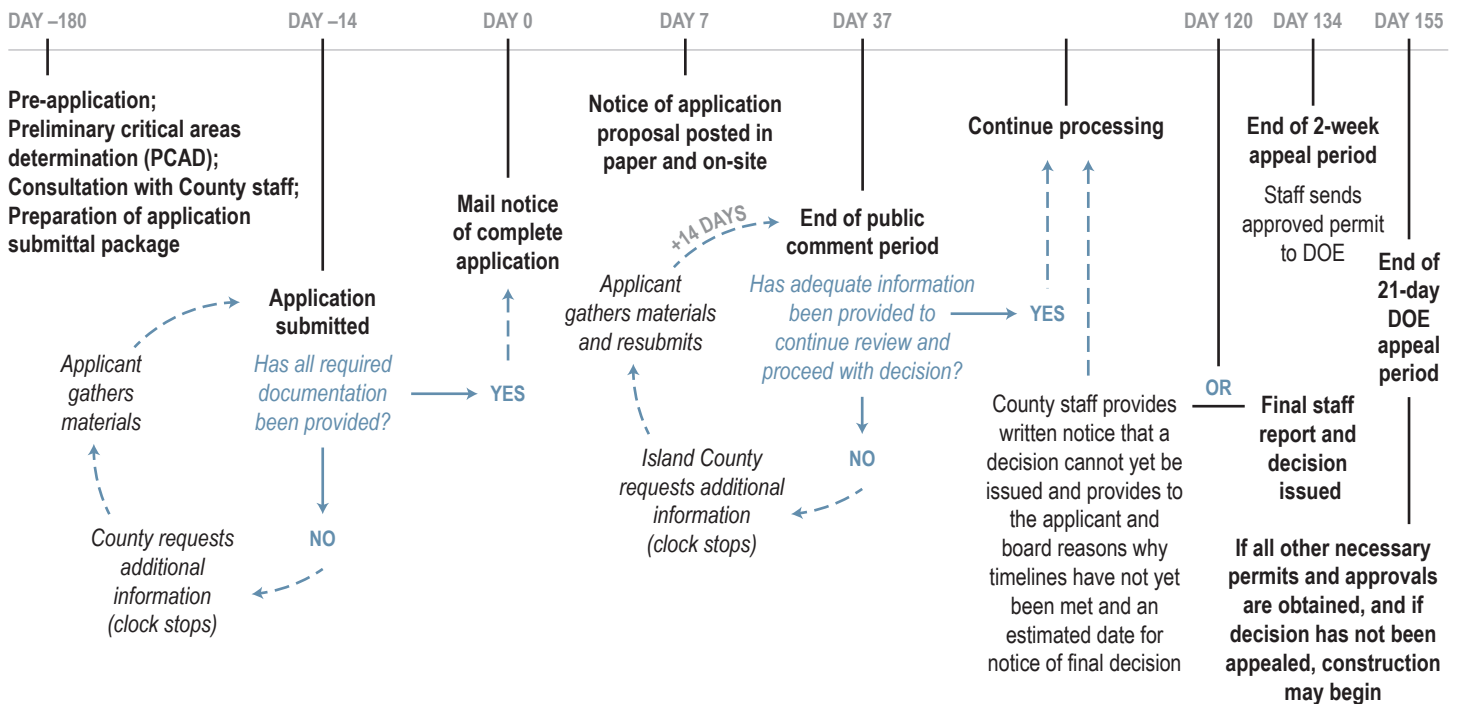
Depending on the permit type, Island County has 30 to 120 days to review a permit application and issue a decision. The following are not included in the review timeline:

- Any period of time during which the applicant has been requested to provide additional information (this period is calculated from the date the need for additional information is mailed to the applicant until about 14 days after the date the additional information has been provided);

- EIS preparation following a SEPA determination of significance;
- Appeals;
- Any period of time during which an applicant fails to post notice on the property or otherwise comply with posting requirements, until compliance is confirmed;
- Any time extension mutually agreed upon by the applicant and the department; and
- Other reviews and approvals required by Island County or other jurisdictions.

The proceeding flow chart illustrates a general shoreline permit review processes and timeline. (The process may be shorter for SHEs or longer for S-CUP and S-VAR Permits.)

Shoreline Substantial Development Permit Application Timeline



NOTE: TIMELINE IS APPROXIMATE;
ACTUAL "DAY" NUMBERS MAY VARY

What are the Permit Criteria and Conditions of Approval?

Generally, conditions on permit approvals will be aimed at SMA environmental protection standards including “no net loss of shoreline ecological functions” that provide fish and wildlife habitat and protect water quality. Conditions of approval generally limit work on site to that approved on the site plans and other review documents, ensure vegetation and other landscaping is installed and survives, and require avoidance or minimization of shoreline impacts. A condition on all permit approvals ensures that no work is to begin until all other necessary reviews and approvals have been obtained, and that appeal periods have expired.

How Much Will a Shoreline Permit Cost?

Island County will establish a Land Use Permit Fee Schedule applicable to shoreline permits. Fees shall be assessed according to the established schedule, and permit fees assessed accordingly. In addition to the land use permit fees, a 3% technology fee is added to the total permit cost. After-the-fact permits are twice as much as the normal fee, in addition to any other costs, and a \$150 fee will be charged for the third subsequent review letter requested to address the same issue. Please obtain the effective Land Use Permit Fee Schedule from the County.



Above: Deception Pass, Whidbey Island; top right: Lagoon Point, Whidbey Island; bottom right: Port Susan, Camano Island

Resources for Your Clients

Shoreline FAQs

How does the SMP apply to agricultural activities?

When SMPs are updated, the SMP does not apply retroactively to existing agriculture. Updated SMP requirements, including use restrictions, buffer and setback requirements, vegetation management, and impervious surface coverage limits apply to new and expanded agricultural activities, and where agricultural activities are converted to other uses.

Is it true that the new SMP requires me to tear down my existing structure?

No. The updated SMP only regulates new development constructed after its adoption. There are no retroactive shoreline master program requirements.

Are SMP regulations a “taking” of private property rights?

The U.S. Constitution allows local governments to limit private property activities for public benefit, provided they do not deprive the landowner of all reasonable use of the property. SMP regulations do not deprive landowners of all reasonable use of their property. In limited instances where regulations interfere with a reasonable use, the property owner may obtain a variance permit.

Won't buffers and other shoreline regulations decrease my property values?

Waterfront property has skyrocketed in value in the past 30 years despite the regulation of shoreline buffers during the same period. Protecting buffers along the shoreline enhances property values by:

- Stabilizing slopes
- Screening adjacent development from view
- Providing attractive landscaping and habitat
- Blocking noise and glare from adjacent properties

I just want to maintain vegetation in my yard. Are there rules I should know?

Maintenance of existing, legally-established, residential landscaping is allowed. Once the existing landscaping in the buffer is removed or the site is developed or redeveloped, vegetation must adhere to new regulations.

Are there limitations on repairs to houses, barns, bulkheads, docks or other structures?

The SMP allows for the normal maintenance and repair of existing, lawfully constructed structures. Maintenance and repair are considered an exempt shoreline activity, and while a Shoreline Exemption Permit will likely be required, the SMP will not prohibit this work. In addition, the replacement of an existing, lawful structure may be allowed as repair where such replacement is the common method of repair. In all instances, the replacement structure must be comparable to the original, and it must not cause substantial adverse impacts to the shoreline environment.

Pre-Application Conferences and Preliminary Critical Areas Determinations (PCADS) – extended to include Shoreline Jurisdiction)

Consultants and property owners both benefit when they are well-informed about the types and extent of allowable development on a piece of property, the presence of possible site constraints such as critical areas, the permitting process and review timeline, and other application considerations. Having answers ahead of time makes for a more streamlined, predictable, and less expensive process. Island County staff are available to assist you.

If you have questions about a relatively complicated project or site, convening a pre-application conference may be appropriate. A pre-application conference application must be completed by the applicant and submitted to the Planning Department. Upon receipt, interdisciplinary County staff will review the application and schedule a conference with you (and your client, if preferred) at County offices. Together, you discuss the development proposal, site constraints and opportunities, the application submittal requirements, permit timeline, and other relevant information. The process takes 30 days from receipt of the application.

Benefits of the conference include:

- Preliminary comprehensive evaluation of project and site feasibility prior to costly permit application submittal;
- One-on-one extended timeslot to discuss proposal and alternatives, if necessary;
- Interdisciplinary review team, including Island County Health and Public Works staff, available to respond to applicant's questions;
- Fee for the pre-application conference is credited in full against the permit application fee if the permit application is made within 180 days of the conference;
- A pre-application conference is required for all Type III decisions and for all Type II decisions within the unincorporated portion of an urban growth area or joint planning area. The appropriate municipality for development within urban growth or joint planning areas will attend these meetings, as well.

Shorelines are sensitive ecological areas and often contain a variety of critical areas. In addition, SMP vegetation management regulations, new shoreline setbacks, and limitations on residential building footprints within buffers can limit shorefront development opportunities. Island County staff offers PCAD services that allow property

owners, consultants and contractors to meet with County staff on-site, prior to a permit application submittal, to identify and discuss on-site critical areas. The PCAD services allow applicants to understand site constraints prior to application submittal and design development proposals accordingly.

Summary of Shoreline Homeowner Guidance

Shoreline homeowner guidance materials have been developed by the County to help improve understanding and successful implementation of the current SMP. These guidance materials include:

- A SMP Overview Pamphlet that provides an introduction to shoreline management and permitting along the County's marine and lake shorelines;
- SED and Shoreline Buffer and Setback guidance sheets – this set of guidance sheets are tailored to each SED, and can be provided to shoreline homeowners once you've helped them to identify what SED their property is located within;
- Common Shoreline Development guidance sheets – this set of guidance sheets is provided for common shoreline development activities.

In addition to providing an overview of the County's SMP, these materials are intended to detail key changes within the current SMP, highlight the shoreline permit process, and introduce key shoreline use and design guidelines relevant to common development activities. As you interface with shoreline homeowners, these tools will allow you to communicate the key purposes of the SMP, as well as implications and expectations for each Island County resident's shoreline use and development goals. These materials are designed to be useful to Island County's residential shoreline homeowners, and to you during meetings and interactions with homeowners.



Photo: Hugh Shipman

This Shoreline Design and Permit Application Guide was funded through a National Estuary Program grant from Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

For more information on implications of the SMP for specific shoreline development proposals, please reference the current SMP Regulations and Procedures adopted in ICC 17.05A.

https://www.municode.com/library/wa/island_county/codes/code_of_ordinances?nodeId=TITXVIIZO_CH17.05ASHMAPRREPR

Also contact Island County Planning and Community Development with additional questions:

- **Whidbey Office:** Island County Courthouse Annex, 1 NE 6th St, Coupeville, 98239, (360) 679-7339
- **Camano Annex:** 121 N East Camano Dr, Camano Island, 98282, (360) 629-4522
- <https://www.islandcountywa.gov/planning/>