

# SHORELINE RESTORATION PLAN

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## WHITMAN COUNTY, THE CITIES OF COLFAX, PALOUSE, PULLMAN AND TEKOA, AND THE TOWNS OF ALBION, MALDEN AND ROSALIA

### 1 INTRODUCTION

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This Shoreline Restoration Plan builds on the goals and policies proposed in the Shoreline Master Program (SMP). The Shoreline Restoration Plan provides an important **non-regulatory** component of the SMP to ensure that shoreline functions are maintained or improved despite potential incremental losses that may occur even with implementation of SMP regulations and mitigation actions.

The Shoreline Restoration Plan draws on multiple past planning efforts to identify possible restoration projects and reach-based priorities, key partners in implementing shoreline restoration, and existing funding opportunities. The Shoreline Restoration Plan represents a long-term vision for **voluntary** restoration that will be implemented over time, resulting in ongoing improvement to the functions and processes in the County's shorelines.

Many of the restoration opportunities noted in this plan may apply to private property, as well as public property. It is not the intent of the County to require restoration on private property or to commit privately owned land for restoration purposes without the willing and voluntary cooperation and participation of the affected landowner.

#### 1.1 Purpose

The primary purpose of the Shoreline Restoration Plan is to plan for "overall improvements in shoreline ecological function over time, when compared to the status upon adoption of the master program" (WAC 173-26-201(2)(f)). Secondly, the Shoreline Restoration Plan may enable Whitman County, the Cities of Colfax, Palouse, Pullman and Tekoa; and the Towns of Albion, Malden and Rosalia (hereafter, "the Cities") to ensure that the minimum requirement of no net loss in shoreline ecological function is achieved on a county-wide basis, notwithstanding any shortcomings of individual projects or activities.

Activities that will have adverse effects on the ecological functions and values of the shoreline must be mitigated (WAC 173-26-201(2)(e)). Proponents of such activities are individually required to mitigate for impacts to the shoreline areas, or agreed-to off-site mitigation, which as conditioned, is equal in ecological function to the baseline levels at the time each activity takes place. However, some uses and developments cannot be fully mitigated. This could occur when project impacts may not be mitigated in-kind on an individual project basis, such as a new bulkhead to protect a single-family home that can be offset, but not truly mitigated in-kind unless an equivalent area of bulkhead is removed somewhere else. Another possible loss in function could occur when impacts are sufficiently minor on an individual level, such that mitigation is not required, but are cumulatively significant. Additionally, unregulated activities (such as operation and maintenance of existing agriculture and legal developments) may also degrade baseline conditions. Finally, the SMP applies only to activities in shoreline jurisdiction, yet activities upland of shoreline jurisdiction or upstream in the watershed may have offsite impacts on shoreline functions.

Together, different project impacts may result in cumulative, incremental, and unavoidable degradation of the overall baseline condition unless additional restoration of ecological function is undertaken. Accordingly, the Restoration Plan is intended to be a source of ecological improvements implemented voluntarily by the County and Cities, and other government agencies, developers, non-profit groups, and property owners within shoreline jurisdiction to ensure no net loss of ecological function, and where possible improvement of ecological function (see Figure 1). No net loss of ecological function is defined by the Washington Department of Ecology's (Ecology) SMP Handbook (2010) as follows:

*"Over time, the existing condition of shoreline ecological functions should remain the same as the SMP is implemented. Simply stated, the no net loss standard is designed to halt the introduction of new impacts to shoreline ecological functions resulting from new development. Both protection and restoration are needed to achieve no net loss. Restoration activities also may result in improvements to shoreline ecological functions over time."*

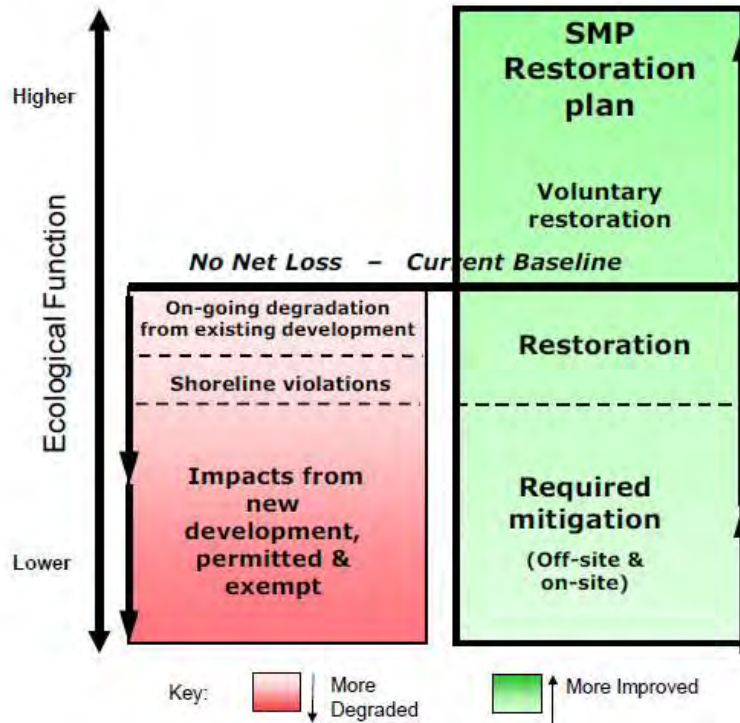


Figure 1. Diagram of the role of restoration relative to achieving the SMP standard of “No net loss” of ecological functions. (Ecology 2010)

## 1.2 Restoration Plan Requirements

This Restoration Plan has been prepared to meet the purposes outlined above, as well as specific requirements of the SMP Guidelines (Guidelines). Specifically, WAC Section 173-26-201(2)(f) of the Guidelines<sup>1</sup> states:

- (i) Identify degraded areas, impaired ecological functions, and sites with potential for ecological restoration;
- (ii) Establish overall goals and priorities for restoration of degraded areas and impaired ecological functions;
- (iii) Identify existing and ongoing projects and programs that are currently being implemented, or are reasonably assured of being implemented (based on an evaluation of funding likely in the foreseeable future), which are designed to contribute to local restoration goals;

<sup>1</sup> The Shoreline Master Program Guidelines were prepared by the Washington Department of Ecology and codified as WAC 173-26. The Guidelines translate the broad policies of the Shoreline Management Act (RCW 90.58.020) into standards for regulation of shoreline uses. See <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/sma/guidelines/index.html> for more background.

- (iv) Identify additional projects and programs needed to achieve local restoration goals, and implementation strategies including identifying prospective funding sources for those projects and programs;
- (v) Identify timelines and benchmarks for implementing restoration projects and programs and achieving local restoration goals;
- (vi) Provide for mechanisms or strategies to ensure that restoration projects and programs will be implemented according to plans and to appropriately review the effectiveness of the projects and programs in meeting the overall restoration goals.

In addition to meeting the requirements of the Guidelines, this Restoration Plan is intended to identify and prioritize areas for future restoration and mitigation, support the County's, Cities' and other organizations' applications for grant funding, and to identify the various entities and their roles working within the County and Cities to enhance its shoreline environment.

### **1.3 Types of Restoration Activities**

Consistent with Ecology's definition, use of the word "restore" in this document is not intended to encompass actions that reestablish historic conditions. Instead, it encompasses a suite of strategies that can be approximately delineated into five categories:

- **Creation:** Establishment of new shoreline resource functions where none previously existed.
- **Re-establishment:** Restoration of a previously existing converted resource that no longer exhibits past functions.
- **Rehabilitation:** Restoration of functions that are significantly degraded.
- **Enhancement:** Improvement of functions that are somewhat degraded.
- **Preservation:** Protection of an existing high-functioning resource from potential degradation. Preservation is often achieved through conservation easements or the purchase of land.

Restoration can sometime be confused with mitigation. Mitigation is defined by WAC 197-11-768 as the sequential process of avoiding, minimizing, rectifying and reducing impacts, as well as compensating for unavoidable impacts and monitoring the impact. Two primary conditions differentiate the terms restoration and mitigation: the outcome and whether the action is voluntary or required as a result of anticipated or realized impacts. Table 1 describes the differences between the two terms.

**Table 1. Characteristics of restoration versus mitigation.**

<b>Restoration</b>	<b>Mitigation</b>
Actions to reestablish or improve functions or processes above the existing baseline condition.	Actions to compensate for unavoidable negative impacts to functions or processes and return functions and processes to existing baseline condition (the condition prior to the proposed impact).
Voluntary	Required as a result of anticipated or realized impacts

Although some of the projects or programs included in this Restoration Plan may be implemented as mitigation, only those projects and programs that have reliable certainty of being implemented as restoration will be utilized in the County’s and Cities’ cumulative impacts analysis.

#### **1.4 Contents of this Restoration Plan**

As directed by the SMP Guidelines, the following discussions provide a summary of baseline shoreline conditions, list restoration goals and objectives, describe existing plans and programs that facilitate restoration actions, identify the County’s and Cities’ partners in restoration, and enumerate ongoing and potential projects that positively impact the shoreline environment. The Restoration Plan also identifies anticipated scheduling and funding of restoration elements.

In total, implementation of the SMP in combination with this Restoration Plan will result in no net loss of ecosystem function, and voluntary actions and partnerships identified in this Plan may result in a net improvement in Whitman County’s and the Cities’ shoreline environment. The restoration opportunities identified in this plan are focused primarily on publicly owned open spaces and natural areas. **Any restoration on private property would occur only through voluntary means or through re-development proposals.**

#### **1.5 Utility of this Restoration Plan**

In addition to meeting a grant requirement, this Restoration Plan can be used by property owners and other interest groups in several ways.

1. Information Resource: This plan identifies a number of organizations in Chapter 4, Existing and Ongoing Plans and Programs, that provide guidance, and in some cases funding, for a wide variety of restoration projects. These organizations can be consulted by property owners or other parties wishing to