

# WEEKLY REVIEW

BENTON COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

June 22, 2021



*This document is a weekly review of the Board of County Commissioners meeting, Tuesday, June 22, 2021. Information related to agenda changes, Consent Agenda, and Public Comment are on the [County website](#).*

## Public Hearing

### *Benton County Shoreline Master Program Update – Greg Wendt, Director of Community Development*

The Shoreline Management Act (SMA), [RCW 90.58](#), requires mandatory "periodic updates" to local shoreline master programs every eight (8) years. Every Washington city and county must periodically review and, if needed, revise its Shoreline Master Program (SMP) to ensure compliance with the SMA. The last update of the Benton County SMP was completed and approved by the Washington State Department of Ecology in 2015. Per RCW 90.58, the Benton County SMP is required to be updated by June 2021. Ben Floyd, White Bluffs Consulting, has assisted the County with the development of the SMP update. The County has prepared draft SMP amendments to keep the SMP current with changes in state law, changes in other county plans and regulations, and other changed local circumstances. Benton County and the Department of Ecology held a joint local/state Public Comment Period and Public Hearing on Benton County's Shoreline Master Program Periodic Review on April 13, 2021 and continued the hearing to May 11, 2021. The Planning Commission continued the hearing to May 11, 2021 to ensure all public comments were addressed in the response matrix. The Planning Commission, after taking testimony and discussion among the Commission members, voted to forward a recommendation for approval of the proposed amendments subject to ten (10) findings of fact. It is the recommendation of the Planning Department to approve the updated Benton County Shoreline Master Program. **The Board moved and seconded to close the public comment and continue the public hearing decision-making process until August 17, 2021 at the Benton County Courthouse (Prosser). Motion carried.**

### *Planning Ordinance Relating to Critical Areas, General Provisions, and Fish and Wildlife Habitat Conservation Areas; Amending Ordinance 609 - Greg Wendt, Director of Community Development*

The proposed ordinance amendment updates the regulations in the Benton County Critical Area Ordinance. The amendment includes updates to the following: 1) BCC 15.02.120 (a) Applicability. An update to the references associated with Voluntary Stewardship Program; 2) BCC 15.14.040(g) Performance Standards-General Requirements. An update to the minimum standard buffer widths for creeks and streams; and 3) Appendix- General References and Best Available Science. An update to the County's Best Available Science listing. Ben Floyd, White Bluffs Consulting, has assisted the County with the development of the CAO update, including a Riparian Buffer Analysis which included the development of stream and riparian buffer protections. The analysis includes data for 29 stream segments in the County along with stream buffer recommendations. The stream analysis and buffer recommendations were developed in consultation with the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife representatives. To address public comments, a comment response matrix has been developed to specifically address each comment or potential concern. The Planning Commission held a public hearing on April 13, 2021 and continued the hearing to May 11, 2021 to ensure all public comments were addressed in the response matrix. The Planning Commission, after taking testimony and discussion among the Commission members, voted to forward a recommendation for approval of the proposed amendments subject to thirteen (13) findings of fact. **The Board moved and seconded to close the public comment and continue the public hearing decision-making process until August 17, 2021 at the Benton County Courthouse (Prosser). Motion carried.**

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