

**WHATCOM COUNTY
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Satpal Singh Sidhu, Whatcom County Executive, and the Honorable Members of the Whatcom County Council, collectively serving in their capacity as the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors

THROUGH: Elizabeth Kosa, Public Works Director *EaK*

FROM: Kraig Olason, Stormwater Program Manager *ko*

DATE: January 24, 2025

RE: Resolution Amending the Birch Bay Comprehensive Stormwater Plan to Include Four Subwatershed Master Plans

Requested Action

Public Works respectfully requests that Whatcom County Council, acting as the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors, approve a resolution amending the 2006 Birch Bay Comprehensive Stormwater Plan to include four subwatershed master plans (SWMPs) that were completed between 2013-2023 (Exhibit A) and adopt the plan containing this additional reference information as an agency SEPA policy under the State Environmental Policy Act.

The SWMPs address drainage and surface water flooding problems in the geographical areas identified in each plan through development of capital projects. These projects consist primarily of new or improved storm drain systems. Collectively, the plans identify and prioritize 58 capital projects to solve drainage-related problems. The SWMPs also identify small works projects, special studies, and maintenance needs within the urbanized areas of the Birch Bay watershed.

The SWMPs provide Whatcom County staff, the Birch Bay Watershed & Aquatic Resources Management District (BBWARM) Advisory Committee, and other community groups and agencies with guidance and details on the condition of stormwater infrastructure and drainage issues throughout the Birch Bay watershed, as well as project cost estimates and prioritization of needs. The recommended projects contained within the four SWMPs are intended to protect water quality, enhance aquatic habitat, and reduce stormwater impacts such as flooding and erosion in Birch Bay. Each project selected from the plans for construction will go through SEPA review on an individual basis.

The purpose of adopting the plans and studies into the Birch Bay Comprehensive Stormwater Plan is to make them a more widely-known and available resource to county staff, government agencies, developers, and the community, as well as enhance awareness of their existence and legitimacy. Of specific importance is the identification of undersized systems where flooding is known or shown to occur based on extensive hydraulic and hydrologic modeling undertaken as a component of each SWMP. This information should help ensure that project proposers and reviewers are aware of potential impacts to downstream drainage systems.

Please contact Kraig Olason at extension 6301 if you have any questions or concerns regarding this proposed resolution.