

Elizabeth Kosa
Interim Director



James P. Karcher, P. E.
County Engineer
322 N. Commercial Street, Ste 301
Bellingham, WA 98225-4042
Phone: (360) 778-6210
Fax: (360) 778-6211

Memorandum

To: The Honorable Satpal Sidhu, Whatcom County Executive and
The Honorable Members of the Whatcom County Council

Through: Elizabeth Kosa, Interim Director *EaK*

From: James P. Karcher, P.E., County Engineer *gpk*

Date: March 15, 2023

Re: **Ordinance Establishing a Temporary Speed Limit for Birch Bay Lynden Road**

Requested Action

Public Works respectfully requests that the County Council adopt the proposed ordinance to establish a temporary speed limit of 35 MPH on Birch Bay Lynden Road from 1850 feet west of Berthusen Road to the Lynden City Limits.

Background and Purpose

The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) has requested the use of Birch Bay Lynden Road as part of a detour route for SR-539 traffic during the construction of their SR-539 Duffner Ditch – Fish Passage Project. The County Engineer has agreed to this use and signed a formal Haul/Detour Agreement with WSDOT for this project. As part of recommended safety measures due to the increases in traffic that this detour will cause, a temporary 35 MPH speed limit is proposed during the construction of the project. The project will require a northbound roadway closure of SR-539 for up to 10 working days during the in-water construction work window of July 15th through September 30th, 2023. The contractor will not be allowed to conduct the closure during holidays and during the Northwest Washington Fair, scheduled from August 10th through 19th. Per WSDOT, the 2021 Average Daily Traffic of SR-539 in this area was measured at 17,000 vehicles. Following the completion of the closure of SR-539, the signs will be removed.

Information

This ordinance will allow for the installation of speed limit signs and is necessary to comply with RCW 46.61.415 to establish speed limits on certain County roads.

Please contact Douglas Ranney II, P.E., Engineering Services Manager at extension 6255 with any questions regarding this ordinance.