

Lake Whatcom Management Program 2025-2029 Work Plan

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January 28, 2025



LWMP Five-Year Work Plan Overview

- Coordinated effort between the LWMP partners:
 - City of Bellingham
 - Lake Whatcom Water and Sewer District
 - Whatcom County
- Broad overview to guide our work to protect Lake Whatcom
- Sixth five-year work plan since 2000
- Annual Progress Reports contain specific details of work accomplished



12 Program Areas

1. Land Preservation
2. Stormwater Management
3. Land Use
4. Monitoring and Data
5. Hazardous Materials
6. Recreation
7. Aquatic Invasive Species
8. Utilities & Transportation
9. Education & Engagement
10. Administration
11. Climate Action
12. Forest Management

PROGRAM AREA 1

Land Preservation

GOAL: Increase the amount of preserved and restored land to reduce development and other land disturbance to protect watershed health and fish and wildlife habitat.

**2025-2029
Estimated
Investments:
\$28.4 million**



Summary

The LWMP acquires lands for the protection of watershed health through reconveyance, the City's Lake Whatcom Land Acquisition and Preservation Program, and other methods, while allowing passive recreation opportunities where appropriate.

Objectives

1.1 Property Protection

Acquire property using a variety of methods, such as purchase, conservation easements, and donations to prevent development and other land use disturbances that degrade the natural functions of the watershed.

1.1.1 Purchase watershed properties based on evaluation criteria, availability, and seller interest.

1.1.2 Evaluate the use of other programs to augment the watershed acquisition program to purchase watershed properties.

1.1.3 Share information about the acquisition program with watershed property owners to encourage program participation.

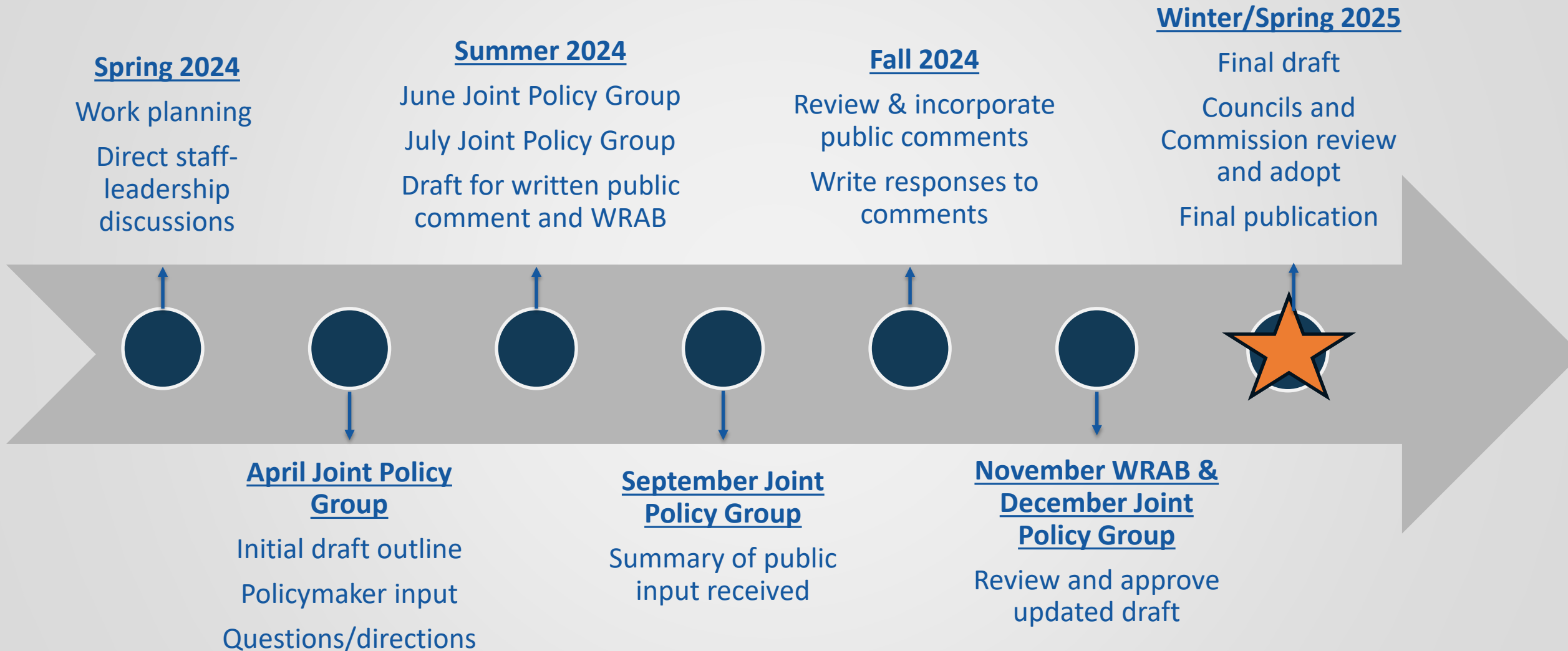


**ALL PROTECTED
LAKE WHATCOM
WATERSHED PROPERTIES**

*Including Reconveyance, City
Acquisitions, and Other*

12,596 acres as of 2024

Work Plan Timeline



Public Engagement

- Public comment period open between July 25 - August 25 on LWMP website and Engage Bellingham
- Comments accepted on full work plan or individual program areas
- 307 total comments received and responded to:
 - 37 individuals
 - 6 organizations

Lake Whatcom Management Program 2025-2029 Draft Work Plan

DRAFT July 2024



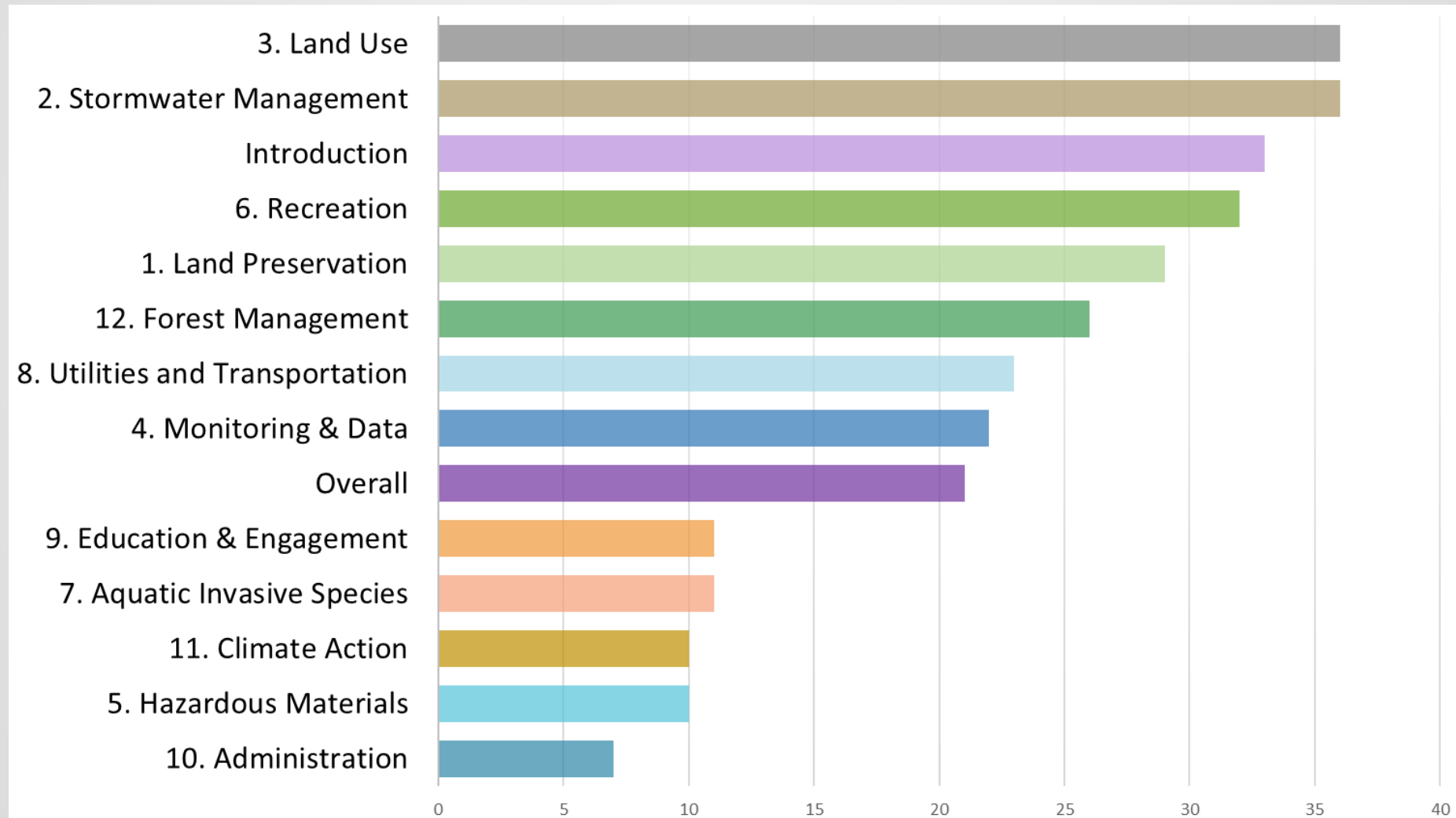
Photo by K. Moran, 2014



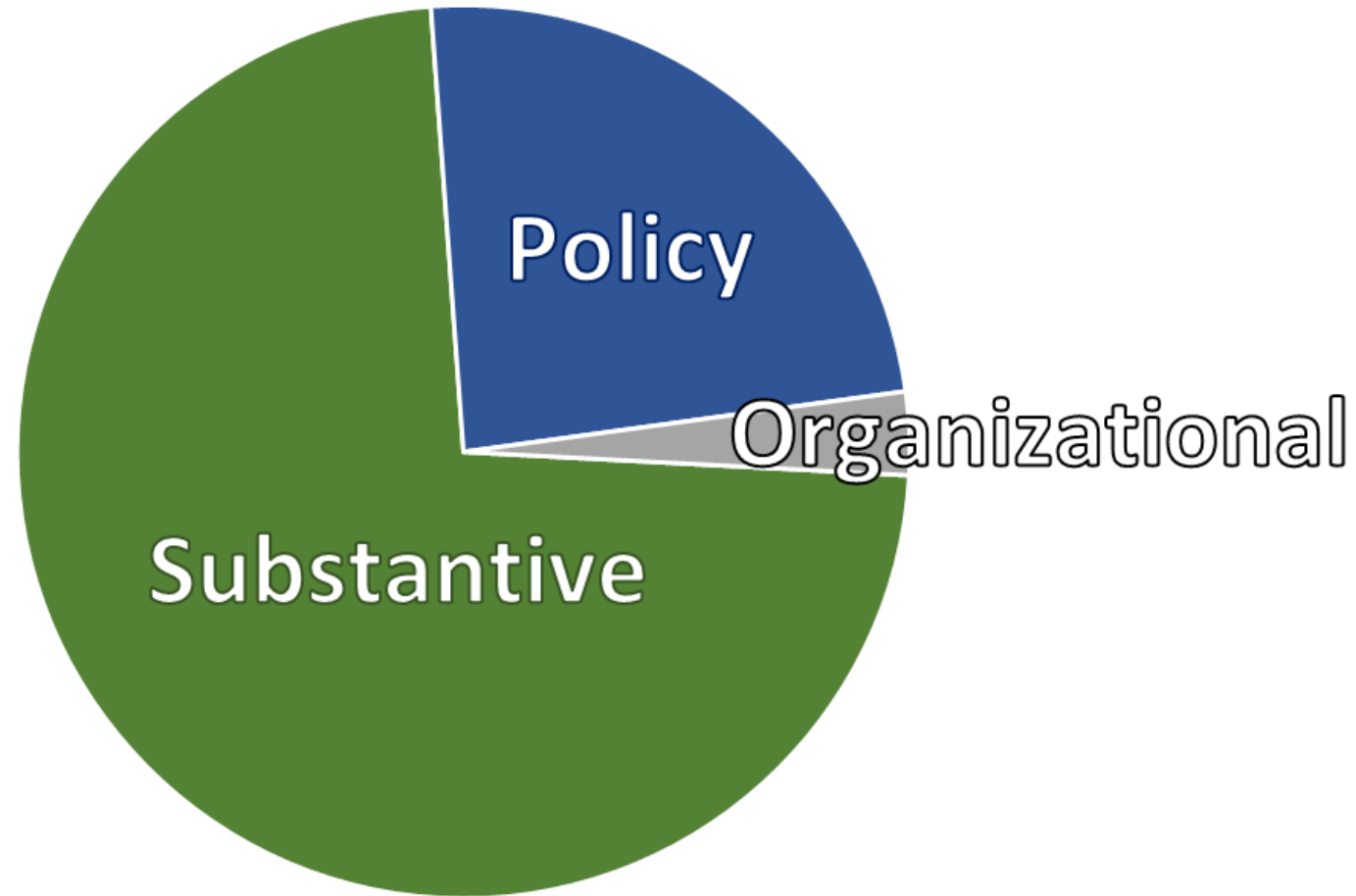
Prepared by the Lake Whatcom
Interjurisdictional Coordinating Team

Graphic shared on social media in July 2024

Public Comments by Program Area



Public Comments by Type



Public Comment Response

Staff wrote responses to all comments received and posted responses online in November. All comments were shared with the Lake Whatcom Policy Group for policy consideration.

Staff Response	Work Plan Edit
This section was rewritten to summarize the management challenges, and this exact phrase no longer exists.	Shortened section in Management Challenges to be more succinct.
<p>The Management Challenges section is meant to serve as an overview of LWMP objectives, challenges associated with each objective, and how the LWMP partners are working to overcome the challenges to meet the associated objective, not to define specific actions and associated metrics to monitor progress towards objective attainment. This section has since been rewritten. More information about specific programs and relevant actions is provided in each program area.</p> <p>In regard to clogged water intake structures, the City built a Dissolved Air Flotation pretreatment system at its Water Treatment Plant in 2018 to help remove algae.</p>	<p>The introduction to this section was re-written to better relay the section's intent.</p> <p>Information about the City's Dissolved Air Flotation pretreatment system was added to the Management Challenges section.</p>

Major Edits Made to Work Plan

- Re-organized to more clearly state purpose
- Aligned objectives with 12 program area goals
- Incorporated SMART goals (strategic, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound)
- Provided more links to underlying reports/data
- Clearly articulated organizational structure
- Showed federal and state agency involvement

Major Edits Made to Work Plan

- Incorporated adaptive management
- Added metrics for land acquisition
- Aligned recreation goals with climate goals
- Added boating to recreation section
- Added metric for sewer overflows

Final Work Plan Draft

The January 2025 Work Plan draft:

- Incorporates public feedback, where feasible
 - Work plan timeline extended to allow ample time to address all comments and revise plan
- Reviewed and supported by the Lake Whatcom Policy Group
- Reviewed and supported by the City of Bellingham's Water Resources Advisory Board (WRAB)



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JANUARY 2025



Prepared by the Lake Whatcom
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Next Steps:

- January: Present plan to Bellingham City Council, Whatcom County Council, and LWWSD Board of Commissioners for approval
- February: Engage Lake Whatcom Policy Group on Policy Comments
- April 2nd: Annual Lake Whatcom Joint Councils and Commission (JCC) meeting:
 - 2020-2024 5-Year Progress Report
 - Annual Monitoring Report

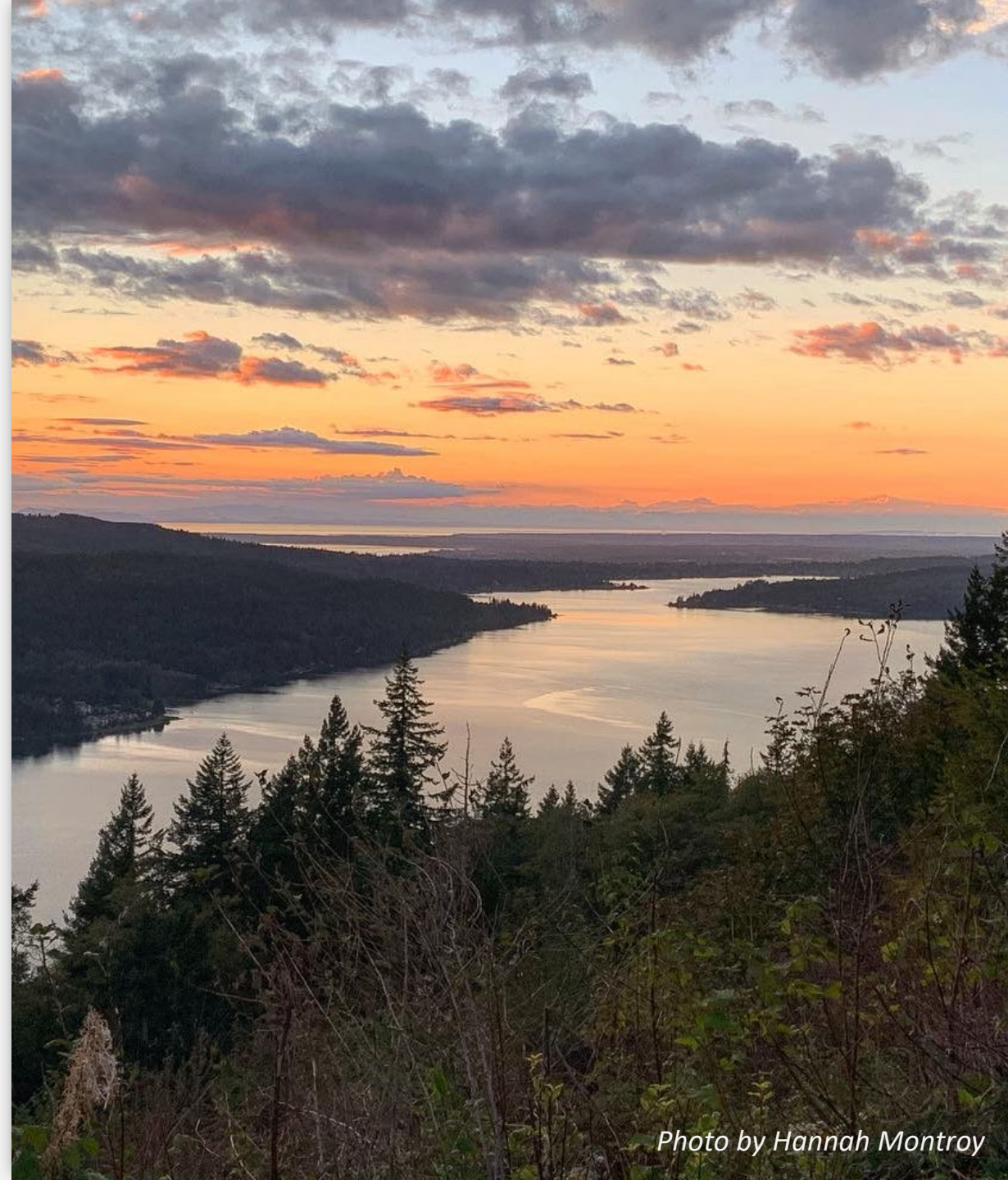


Photo by Hannah Montroy

Recommendation

- Staff recommends approval of the 2025-2029 LWMP Work Plan

Questions?