



WHATCOM COUNTY

WASHINGTON

Planning & Development Services
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Memorandum

TO: Whatcom County Council

FROM: Lauren Templeton, Planner II

THROUGH: Mark Personius, Director

DATE: October 23, 2025

SUBJECT: Open Space Applications – Fall 2025

Every 6 months, staff at Planning & Development Services (PDS) present Open Space Land applications to the Planning Commission and County Council. The attached Staff Report summarizes findings and recommendations on **ONE** application for classification of land as "Open Space Land" as authorized under RCW 84.34 and Whatcom County Ordinance No. 1995-040.

New Applications:

OSP2025-001 - Stevens

- PDS staff conducted a site visit and evaluated the subject property according to the Public Benefit Rating System, which yielded a score of 50.87. The landowner has requested a waiver of public access.
- PDS policy dictates that scores over 45 receive a staff recommendation for approval, and therefore, **PDS recommends approval of this Open Space application.**
- The Planning Commission hosted a Public Hearing on October 9, 2025 and unanimously voted to **recommend denial of the application *unless* public access was allowed.**
- The landowner has agreed to public access, which is outlined in the Supplemental Memorandum to Stevens Open Space Application, completed by the applicant. The memo is included in the application packet.
- The Public Benefit Rating System has been updated to reflect the public access allowances and now has a score of 66.17.

Summary of Request:

Per RCW 84.34 and county code, Whatcom County Council is the granting authority that must make a final decision on all applications to Open Space Land. Council is requested to approve (in whole or in part) the Stevens application by passing the Proposed Resolution, or to deny the application.

Please contact Alexander Harris at (360) 992-2318 or Lauren Templeton at (360) 778-5956 with any questions.