



Walla Walla County SMP Periodic Review

Public Participation Plan (January 2023)

Introduction

Walla Walla County (County) is undertaking a periodic review of its Shoreline Master Program (SMP), as required by the Washington State Shoreline Management Act (SMA), RCW 90.58.080(4). The SMA requires each SMP be reviewed and revised, if needed, on an eight-year schedule established by the Legislature. The review ensures the SMP: stays current with changes in laws and rules; remains consistent with other County plans and regulations; and is responsive to changed circumstances, new information, and improved data.

This Public Participation Plan (PPP) is required to describe how the County will encourage early and continuous public participation throughout the SMP review process. This plan outlines the steps the County will take with support from The Watershed Company (Watershed) to provide opportunities for public engagement and public comment, as well as contact information and web addresses. This plan is in addition to any other minimum requirements for public participation required by Walla Walla County Code.

The County will develop documents outside of comment periods to keep the community updated on the project's status. These informational documents will be available online. Comment period notices and other announcements may be posted online on the County's project website and in various locations throughout the community (for example, local businesses, schools, libraries) as allowable under current circumstances.

This plan is a working document and will be adjusted as needed.

1.0 Public and Agency Goals

Walla Walla County is committed to engaging citizens, business, interest groups, and governmental entities in the preparation of a Shoreline Master Program that reflects local values and needs in a manner consistent with State law and regulations.

Public Participation Goals will be achieved by implementing the following strategies:

- Encouraging an inclusive planning process
- Transparent information sharing
- Engaging Participants in constructive dialog through a variety of methods
- Cooperating with other entities and organizations
- Creating a foundation for future County planning efforts

2.0 Team Roles and Responsibilities

Name	Organization	Role
Lauren Prentice	County	Director of Community Development
Jennifer Ballard	County	Senior Planner, project lead
Michael Meret	County	Planning Technician, project support
Dan Nickel	Watershed	Consultant Project Manager
Mark Daniel	Watershed	Environmental Planning Support
Alex Capron	Watershed	Environmental Planning Support
Brianna Hines	Watershed	Environmental Planning Support
Laura Kiel	Watershed	Technical Communication Support
Angela Mele	Watershed	Technical Communication Support

3.0 Public Engagement Opportunities

The County is committed to providing multiple opportunities for the public to learn about and be informed of the SMP update process with a formal public comment period prior to local adoption. The County will take advantage of various modes of communication to inform the public and encourage their participation, tailoring messaging as need to reach minority and disadvantaged communities whenever possible.

The County also recognizes that we are in a period of time where opportunities for in-person public involvement are limited and subject to changing pandemic circumstances. Public engagement opportunities will follow current health and safety guidelines for Washington State, relying primarily on virtual and digital platforms. Opportunities will include:

3.1 County webpage

The County will update the existing Shoreline Master Program webpage to help inform interested citizens and community members regarding the periodic update, including project status, draft documents, official notices, minutes, and other project information. This webpage will be the primary repository of all information related to the SMP update process. The County will also provide an e-mail address for questions or comments from the public (planning@co.walla-walla.wa.us). Website visitors will be invited to sign-up for the County's SMP Periodic Review email list.

3.2 Online open house

Watershed will develop an online open house (a website) independent from the County website to launch the SMP Periodic Review process (<http://www.wallawallasmpopenhouse.com>). This website will inform the public about the SMP review process, the topics that could be amended, the project timeline, and future opportunities for public engagement. Watershed will work with the County to develop notification materials including public notices, email notification, and social media advertisements to ensure broad participation from target stakeholders.

The online open house will kick-off with a virtual public meeting in early 2023 hosted and facilitated by Watershed (See section 3.3 below). During the virtual public meeting, community members will learn

about the content on the online open house and have the opportunity to ask clarifying questions directly to County staff and the consultant team.

3.3 Periodic virtual drop-in sessions

The County, with support from Watershed, may hold periodic virtual drop-in sessions to informally connect with the public and provide them with information throughout the SMP review process. Each drop-in session will follow a similar format, including: a brief presentation on a topic related to the SMP process; a Q&A to respond to questions related to the topic; and open time for members of the public to drop-in and ask questions more broadly about the SMP Periodic Review.

Meetings will be held at a predictable time approximately every two months and topics for meeting presentations will be posted ahead of time on the County's project webpage. Meetings will also be recorded and posted to the project webpage for people who were not able to attend.

Topics for drop-in sessions could include: public participation plan overview; review of the SMP webpage and online open house; overview of the required periodic update elements; how to write and submit a public comment; or the County's steps to finalize SMP documents.

3.4 Consultations with key communities

The County, with support from Watershed, will be available for consultations throughout the SMP review process to engage with key communities and to gain a deeper understanding about what's working well in the existing SMP and what could be improved. Target key communities may include tribes, minority and low-income communities, property owners directly impacted by SMP legislation, environmental interest groups, relevant agency staff, and neighboring jurisdictions.

After the draft SMP is released for public comment, consultations may focus on collecting input from key communities on the draft amendments.

3.5 E-notice mailing list

The County will establish an e-notice mailing list of interested persons and organizations. Notices will provide general information about the project, contact information for submitting comments, and times and locations of public meetings or hearings or how to request one if not yet scheduled.

Members of the community will be able to sign up for the e-notice by visiting the County's SMP Periodic Review webpage. Once the e-notice mailing list sign-up link is established, the County will also send a notification to contacts on all related mailing lists to provide them with information on how to join the e-notice mailing list.

3.6 News media

The County will keep local news media up-to-date on the review process and receive copies of all official notices and communications materials.

3.7 Public comments

The County will encourage interested citizens to provide feedback and questions to the County. The County will formally consider comments received during a designated comment period discussed below. All comments received during the public comment period will be forwarded to the Planning Commission, Board of County Commissioners and Department of Ecology.

The County plans to hold a 30-day joint public comment period with the Department of Ecology prior to formal adoption. This will allow interested members of the public to comment on draft amendment documents for the Shoreline Master Program update.

3.8 Walla Walla County Planning Commission

The County’s Planning Commission will be the primary forum for detailed review and recommendations to Ecology. Interested citizens are encouraged to participate in Planning Commission meetings in alignment with Washington State health and safety guidelines and provide verbal comments to the County during the Planning Commission deliberations (as described in Section 4 “Public Comment” below). The County Planning Commission will make recommendations to the Board of County Commissioners. Official notices will be published as established in County policy.

4.0 Public Comment

The Planning Commission will conduct a public comment period and at least one public hearing to consider public testimony on the SMP Periodic Review. The County will coordinate with Department of Ecology on notice of comment periods to take advantage of Ecology’s optional SMP amendment process that allows for a joint state/local comment period per WAC 173-26-104. Public notice of the joint public hearing with the Planning Commission will state the date/time, review body and location of the public hearing. Notices will be published per official policy, sent to the stakeholders mailing list mentioned above and Department of Ecology.

5.0 Potential Stakeholders

The term “stakeholders” describes all interested participants in the Shoreline Master Program update process. Stakeholders can include citizens, for-profit firms, non-governmental organizations, and governmental entities. Please note that this appendix is an initial accounting of potential interested participants based upon outreach conducted during the County’s comprehensive update of the SMP.

Citizens

All citizens are included within this group, regardless of interest. They may be people living or owning property along the shoreline, accessing shorelines for recreation, or relying on them for their livelihood. Citizens include not only Walla Walla County residents, but also the many visitors who use our shorelines and support our local economy.

Businesses

The Shoreline Master Program update will be of interest to many businesses throughout Walla Walla County. The following list includes those businesses typically associated with shoreline issues:

- Agriculture
- Aquaculture
- Banking
- Construction
- Fishing
- Forest Products Manufacturing
- Forestry

- Manufacturing
- Marine and Rail Transportation
- Media
- Real Estate
- Recreation
- Sand and Gravel Extraction
- Tourism and Lodging

Stakeholder Groups

Stakeholder groups are those groups that directly or indirectly have a connection with the Walla Walla shorelines. These include but are not limited to economic development and tourism, recreation, and environmental protection issues. These groups that have been active in the past on shoreline or shoreline-related issues include:

Blue Mountain Audubon Society	Blue Mountain Land Trust
Blue Mountain Resource Conservation and Development Council	Northwest Grain Growers
Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group	Snake River Salmon Recovery Board
Touchet Gun Club	Tri-State Steelheaders
Two Rivers Riding Club	Walla Walla Basin Watershed Council
Walla Walla Community College	Walla Walla County Cattlemen’s Association
Walla Walla County Farm Bureau	Walla Walla Gun Club Inc.
Walla Walla University	Walla Walla Valley Historical Society
Walla Walla Valley Wine Alliance	Walla Walla Watershed Alliance
Walla Walla Watershed Partnership	Walla Walla Yacht Club Inc.
Shoreline property owners	Walla Valley Chamber of Commerce
Cities of Prescott, Waitsburg, and Walla Walla	Columbia and Walla Walla County Conservation Districts
Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation	Port of Walla Walla
Prescott Joint Park and Recreation District	Water and Environmental Center
Whitman College	WSU Walla Walla County Extension
Walla Walla River Irrigation District	Waitsburg-Coppei Flood Control District
Waitsburg Park and Recreation District	Waitsburg Commercial Club
Walla Valley Chamber of Commerce	

Governmental Entities

Local, state, federal, and tribal governments have a significant and wide ranging interest in shoreline management within Walla Walla County. They often are property owners and/or have a permitting interest. It is important to note that some agencies, such as the WA Department of Natural Resources, may have several divisions within the agency with very different interests.

Local Government

- Bolles Prescott Flood Control District
- City of Prescott

- City of Waitsburg
- City of Walla Walla
- City of College Place
- Columbia and Walla Walla County Conservation Districts
- Lower Dry Creek Flood Control District
- Mill Creek Flood Control District
- Port of Walla Walla
- Prescott Joint Park and Recreation District
- Waitsburg Park and Recreation District
- Waitsburg-Coppei Flood Control District
- Walla Walla River Irrigation District

State Government

- WA Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation
- WA Department of Commerce
- WA Department of Ecology
- WA Department of Fish and Wildlife
- WA Department of Natural Resources
- WA Department of Transportation

Federal Government

- US Army Corps of Engineers
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- US Bureau of Land Management

Tribal Government

- Colville Confederated Tribes
- Confederated Tribes of the Umatilla Indian Reservation
- Yakama Nation

6.0 Timeline

The following is a general timeline. The County will coordinate with Department of Ecology throughout. A similar timeline will be posted on the County's SMP Periodic Review website.

2023 WALLA WALLA COUNTY SMP UPDATE SCHEDULE	
January	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Develop a Public Participation Plan• Review SMP and other relevant County codes and policies and prepare a draft SMP Update Periodic Checklist• Draft amendments prepared by County and Consultant
February	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Email notification sent to stakeholders and interested parties• Launch online open house and update County's project website• Begin public information meetings (virtual)
March	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Meetings with Planning Commission• Draft amendments posted on County website• Conduct additional public information meetings, as necessary• Environmental Review (SEPA) and notice to Commerce• Begin 30-day public comment period on draft revisions
April	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Joint Public Hearing before Planning Commission and Ecology during public comment period• Conclude public comment period• Planning Commission meeting to review comments, as necessary• Submit draft amendments to Ecology for review
May-June	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Board of County Commissioners review and adoption• Submit locally adopted SMP to Ecology