

# PugetSoundPartnership

our sound, our community, our chance

STATE OF WASHINGTON

August 30, 2011

City of Bainbridge Island, City Council

The Honorable Kim Brackett

The Honorable Kirsten Hytopoulos

The Honorable Debbi Lester

The Honorable Bob Scales

280 Madison Avenue N.

Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

The Honorable Hilary Franz

The Honorable Bill Knobloch

The Honorable Barry Peters

Dear Mayor Hytopoulos and Councilmembers Brackett, Franz, Knobloch, Lester, Peters, and Scales:

I understand that you received testimony at a recent special session of the Council regarding residential shorelines and the associated need for riparian buffers and restoration of shoreline function to the overall health of Puget Sound. I want to clarify the position of the Puget Sound Partnership in terms of the shoreline's importance and the information cited from the Puget Sound State of the Sound and the Puget Sound Action Agenda during this testimony.

### *Importance of healthy shorelines*

The City of Bainbridge Island is an important partner in our collective work to recover Puget Sound. Safeguarding shorelines to function naturally is critical to ecosystem health by maintaining beach-forming sediment processes, providing shade, food resources, and habitat through native plant communities, and retaining large wood from fallen trees on the beach that create valuable habitat and refuge areas for fish and other shoreline animals. These are just a few examples of the services that healthy shorelines provide; their importance is further documented in the Puget Sound Science Update ([www.psp.wa.gov/downloads/pssu2011/PSSU\\_042011\\_3.pdf](http://www.psp.wa.gov/downloads/pssu2011/PSSU_042011_3.pdf)), through the Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project ([www.pugetsoundnearshore.org/](http://www.pugetsoundnearshore.org/)), and in the USGS report Puget Sound Shorelines and the Impacts of Armoring (<http://pubs.usgs.gov/sir/2010/5254/>).

### *Material cited during testimony*

The testimony you received cited two documents – the 2009 State of the Sound and the 2008 Action Agenda. Both of these documents support protective measures along residential and non-residential shorelines to protect the function of the shoreline.

**2009 State of the Sound:** Table 3.2 in this document notes that “Residential, Industrial, Commercial ... Development” is one of the threats identified to ecosystem recovery. The November 2009 technical memo referenced on the page after Table 3.2 notes that this threat class includes, “developed portions of the environment ... such as those associated with residential ... land uses”

(p. 5 of Threats Tech Memo). On p. 29 you'd see the rating of "very high" for this threat class, meaning that residential development along shorelines is an important threat to Puget Sound.

**2008 Action Agenda:** The exclusion of specific reference to shorelines with residential use and the need for riparian buffers and/or restoration of shorelines with residential use **does not** indicate a lack of importance of this impact to Puget Sound. To clarify this point that indeed this is an important element of recovery, the Puget Sound Partnership has established a target focused on the threat of Shoreline Armoring for this updated version of the Action Agenda (to be finalized in Winter, 2012). In addition, the 2008 Action Agenda describes the following:

1) The Action Agenda strategies are intended to address the adverse effects of threats to Puget Sound. One of these threats is habitat alteration and land use, which includes development along the shoreline (discussed in Question 2, on p. 21).

2) The Action Agenda includes many strategies related to our interests in protecting and restoring shorelines (e.g., substrategy A.2.2 on p. 34 re: increased effectiveness of SMA programs).

3) Finally, although Strategy B.1 in the Action Agenda does not mention marine riparian restoration, the list of project types on p.42 is presented as examples ("... but are not limited to.") Restoration of native riparian vegetation is consistent with the statement in B1 (p.42) that "native species should be used in restoration" and that "projects that restore ecosystem processes [such as providing shade, organic material, and slope stabilization] will result in expanded broader ecosystem benefits."

In conclusion, shoreline use – including residential – that alters shoreline processes is considered to be a serious direct threat to the health of Puget Sound. For our work to protect and restore the health of Puget Sound we place a high priority on addressing this threat.

Please feel free to contact me, or my staff John Meyer, if you have any questions about the contents of this letter or the importance of healthy shorelines to the recovery of Puget Sound.

Regards,



Jeanette Dorner

Director of Salmon and Ecosystem Recovery

cc: Martha Kongsgaard, Puget Sound Partnership Leadership Council Chair  
Dave Somers, Puget Sound Partnership Ecosystem Coordination Board Chair  
The Honorable Steve Tharinger, Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council Chair  
Jan Newton, Puget Sound Partnership Science Panel Chair