

# Pierce County Shoreline Master Program Update

Lake Tapps 1970

Lake Tapps 2014

## What is the Shoreline Master Program?

The County Master Program is the set of policies and regulations that implement the State Shoreline Management Act, which was adopted by voters in 1972 to ensure coordination and efficient management of activities along the State's shorelines.

Pierce County is working with the State Department of Ecology to update our current Shoreline Master Program, which has been in place since the 1970's. Our current Program remains in effect until the new Master Program is approved by the Department of Ecology.

## How does our current Shoreline Master Program differ from the updated Program?

Raft Island 1970

Raft Island 2014

The new Master Program is similar to our existing shoreline regulations. You are still able to apply for home construction along shorelines and propose features such as docks, lifts, and floats, as well as repair and maintain existing lawful structures and features. The updated Master Program will continue to allow for shoreline stabilization if needed to protect primary structures.

The Master Program also contains a number of significant changes, including:

**No Net Loss.** The new Program requires that "no net loss" of shoreline function results from development within shoreline jurisdiction (generally the area within 200' of a shoreline). What is "shoreline function"? Shoreline functions are things like: habitat, food chain support, water quality, and water quantity.

**Buffers.** Our current Master Program requires a 50' "setback" from the shore. Certain activities and features are allowed in that setback, for example: lawns and landscaped areas. Under the new Program, most shoreline areas will require a "buffer". The range of activities and features allowed in a buffer will not be as great as within a setback.

**Vegetation Conservation.** The new Program will require that vegetation be conserved, restored, or replaced when new development is proposed

Lay Inlet 1970

Lay Inlet 2014

Additional information on the County Master Program update can be found online, at <http://www.co.pierce.wa.us/956/Shoreline-Plan>. You can also contact Dave Risvold, Shoreline Planning Supervisor, at 253-798-7036 or [drisvol@co.pierce.wa.us](mailto:drisvol@co.pierce.wa.us)

Additional information on the Shoreline Master Program can be found at the Department of Ecology Shoreline and Coastal Management website <https://ecology.wa.gov/Water-Shorelines/Shoreline-coastal-management>

