

**CITY COUNCIL AGENDA ITEM**  
CITY OF SHORELINE, WASHINGTON

<b>AGENDA TITLE:</b>	Final Draft of the Stream Basin Characterization Study
<b>DEPARTMENT:</b>	Public Works and Planning and Development Services
<b>PRESENTED BY:</b>	Jesus Sanchez, Operations Manager, Public Works Timothy Stewart, Director, Planning and Development Services

**ISSUE STATEMENT:**

This report is a transmittal of the Final Draft of the Stream Basin Characterization Study for the citywide inventory and characterization of stream and wetland resources and their primary functions. The study reports data of existing watercourse resources that are located within the City's nine separate drainage basins. It identifies locations, functions and values. This study is considered one of the most comprehensive stream inventories prepared for basins in the Northeast King County/Southwest Snohomish County region according to a recent third party peer review conducted by qualified professionals in the field of environmental studies.

The baseline information provided by this project constitutes a first step in future watershed-planning efforts within the City. The stream and wetland inventory and characterization provide important data regarding stream habitats, riparian conditions, drainage conditions, and wetlands and fish use.

The fundamental value of the study is that it provides essential scientific data needed for development of policies, regulations, operational standards, capital improvements and the Storm Water Master Plan. The information will serve as the best available science (BAS) for the updates to critical area policies and regulations required under the GMA. The study provides an important data resource to the City and its citizens in support of other technical needs, including project-specific biological assessments, capital improvement projects and review of development permits issued by the City. Comprehensive inventories, specifically those that identify specific limiting factors, would also be useful in support of grant applications.

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## **BACKGROUND:**

In response to the May 15, 2000 staff report regarding the listing of Puget Sound Chinook Salmon as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA), Council directed staff to conduct an inventory and characterization of stream and wetland resources within the City of Shoreline. On November 27, 2000, Council authorized a Professional Services contract with Tetra Tech / KCM, Inc. for the inventory and characterization of stream and wetland resources within the City of Shoreline. The scope of work included identifying and mapping stream and wetland resources, identifying primary ecological functions for each basin, locating fish passage barriers, identifying fish species present and expected wildlife present.

Collecting data for watercourses that traverse extensive areas across both private and public property naturally needed public participation. Most Shoreline property owners were happy to assist the City in this scientific endeavor. Staff obtained permission to access watercourses for field data collection at the properties of 458 Shoreline residents. Some property owners did not allow access. In these instances, the consultant made assumptions based on the characterization observed upstream and downstream from these sites. The City also conducted four Public Workshops in 2001.

Each characterization report includes a description of streams, wetlands, fish use and habitat in the basin. The work for each basin consisted of three phases:

- **Phase I**—Collecting existing information, identifying the stakeholders in the basin and developing a strategy to involve private property owners in the planning process
- **Phase II**—Collecting field data to use in characterizing each basin, including an inventory of streams and wetlands and an assessment of fish presence and habitat condition
- **Phase III**—Characterizing each basin regarding streams, wetlands, fish presence and habitat, fish barriers, riparian habitat, and preparing a report summarizing the results of the inventory and assessment for the basin.

The characterization reports were intended to identify sensitive stream and wetland areas within the City. This information will be useful for development permit review and to ensure that maintenance and operations practices protect these areas. It will also provide a scientifically sound resource data that is needed to enhance City policies and critical area regulations pursuant to the Clean Water and Endangered Species Acts.

The study products include:

- GPS location survey of identified stream and wetland features loaded into the City's GIS system.

- Characterization Reports documenting resource identification, and habitat description for each of the City's nine drainage basins.

The City retained Adolfson Associates, Inc. to conduct a third-party technical review of the Draft Reports. Emphasis was placed on methodology used to complete the evaluations, the application of BAS as evidenced by citation and use of references, and consistency between the Draft Reports relative to the methodology and BAS.

Adolfson's review also recognized that these draft reports provide extensive information on the City of Shoreline's streams and wetlands. This information is at a level of detail that exceeds what most jurisdictions in the region have collected to identify and assess the functions and values of their critical areas. Editorial adjustments were made to improve the clarity of report and its findings. However, the scientific value of the reports were not diminished nor compromised. Tetra Tech incorporated the recommendation of the third party reviewer where appropriate.

This Final Draft Report provides a solid foundation upon which the city can build its next steps. Those specific steps include:

- Public comment on this report, prior to final acceptance, focusing on careful consideration of any new scientific information that may be available.
- Review of Comprehensive Plan Policies, and if appropriate, amendment of those policies based upon best available science,
- Review of Shoreline's Development Regulations, and if appropriate amendment of the development regulations based upon best available science.
- Review of potential Habitat Conservation Areas, and if appropriate, designation and adoption of HCA's as formally designated special districts based upon best available science.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Refer the Final Draft of the Stream Basin Characterization Report to the Planning Commission to receive and review any new scientific information, and to report to the City Council its findings and conclusions.

Approved By:

City Manager  City Attorney N/A

### **ATTACHMENTS:**

2002 Basin Characterization Reports and Assessment Appendices. Copies are available in the City Clerk's Office for public review and purchase.