



Executive Summary – Planning Commission

Issue Title: Department of Community Development: Rural Lands Analysis + Salmon Recovery in Local Planning

Meeting Date: February 17, 2026

Time Required: 30 Minutes

Attendees: Heather Cleveland, Senior Long Range Planner

Action Requested at this Meeting: Information Only.

Background:

The purpose of the Rural Lands Analysis project is to evaluate existing rural land use patterns, policies, and regulatory frameworks in unincorporated Kitsap County and to provide a clear analytical foundation for future rural planning decisions. The second phase of the project will support informed policy development, potential Comprehensive Plan updates, assessment of the pressure for increased density in rural lands as realized during the Rural-to-Rural reclassification request assessment in the 2025 Year of the Rural project, prioritize lands for conservation and preservation, research incentives to maintain agriculture and forestry working lands and general conservation, and identification of targeted code improvements.

This historical effort is informed by prior rural planning initiatives, including the Year of the Rural, but is a distinct project focused on analysis, documentation, and implementation support rather than a comprehensive plan update on its own.

The Rural Lands Analysis, Salmon Recovery in Local Planning Project will identify strategies within local salmon recovery plans that intersect with land use planning and policy implementation in Kitsap County. By linking the goals of salmon recovery with the County's long-range planning framework, this effort will strengthen the alignment between ecological health, rural character, and community resilience.

Next Steps:

- Rural Lands Analysis:
 - Charter, Community Engagement Plan, Project Schedule, Project Webpage

- Compile data, build GIS Hub, begin analysis
- Salmon Recovery in Local Planning
 - Review and approve contract with Department of Commerce
 - Consultant RFP posted
 - Limited Term Employee – Salmon Recovery Long Range Planner; posting in progress
 - Kick-off project with consultant, staff, and project partners
- 2026 Quarterly Planning Commission Briefings

Attachments:

- Presentation

Reference:

- Rural and Resource Lands Chapter: [Ordinance No. 643-2025](#)
- [West Sound Partners for Ecosystem Recovery](#)
- [Hood Canal Coordinating Council](#)
- [2025 State of the Natural Assets Report](#)
- [Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Plan \(WRIA 15 – Kitsap Watershed\)](#)