



## Rural Lands Analysis Salmon Recovery in Local Planning

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# Community Engagement Plan



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## 1 Introduction

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 project will support informed policy development, potential updates to the Rural and Resource Lands Chapter of the Comprehensive Plan, review of deferred rural land use reclassification requests, and identification of targeted code improvements.

This 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.

### Salmon Recovery in Local Planning

Within the Rural Lands Analysis, the 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.

To ensure an inclusive and well-rounded assessment, County staff will engage with residents, community groups, businesses, and Tribes throughout Kitsap County. The purpose is to inform, involve, and gather input from the public to prepare the Rural Lands Analysis and Salmon Recovery in Local Planning projects. This effort will provide essential insights for planning and policy decisions, identify potential barriers, and propose improvements to inform the County's goals, policies, and strategies.

The primary aim of this plan is to establish a unified community engagement approach for the Rural Lands Analysis. This includes defining community engagement goals, identifying key stakeholders, and developing a comprehensive communications strategy with a clear schedule. The plan ensures continuous, early engagement and outreach throughout the project. The outreach process will be carried out in four phases:

- **Phase 1: Awareness.** This phase focuses on making information accessible and meaningful—through the website, reports, and data sharing—while connecting salmon recovery concepts with land use.
- **Phase 2: Feedback and Discussion.** This phase is about structured dialogue with both the salmon recovery technical advisory committee and a broader technical group.
- **Phase 3: Framework Development.** Engagement narrows to working sessions that clarify what will be evaluated and how.

- **Phase 4: Recommendation Development.** This phase uses data, mapping, policies, and program insights to develop actionable recommendations.

This Community Engagement Plan will guide County staff in gathering feedback and ideas related to Kitsap County’s rural land use and salmon recovery efforts. It aims to foster positive community engagement, build trust, ensure transparency, and encourage healthy discussions about the future of rural and resource lands. Through robust community engagement, this plan seeks to ensure that the goals, policies, and strategies proposed in the Rural Lands Report reflect the community’s input, making the plan more effective and widely accepted. The Report will incorporate community feedback that would otherwise be missed without comprehensive engagement.

The Community Engagement Plan is a working document and will be adjusted, as needed.

## 2 Goals and Objectives

The objective of this Community Engagement Plan is to engage equitably and inclusively, so that the resulting Rural Lands Report is well-grounded in the experiences and knowledge of the public. It is important that the County’s reach is broad, so that no individual group or interest dominates.

Through public engagement, the County hopes to better understand the potential negative and positive impacts of the Rural Lands Report’s recommendations so that the full story can be presented to elected officials. Public comment may not directly result in changes, but incorporating both the concerns and ideas of the public will lead to informed policies and regulations.

The Rural Lands Report will not directly amend the Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan; however, the current Comprehensive Plan serves as the foundation for this work. Recommendations from the Rural Lands Report may inform new or more refined policies, as well as the implementation or revitalization of programs that support existing goals, plans, and strategies. While County staff do not have the authority to adopt policies or development regulations, incorporating community input ensures that staff can provide elected officials with a well-rounded understanding of community perspectives as they consider future decisions.

This plan will guide County staff in gathering public comments and ideas on Kitsap County’s rural community member’s vision of rural Kitsap County, quality of life, public safety, growth, and economic development. The plan will also help create positive community engagement, build trust, and foster healthy discussion about growth management. The plan provides for robust community engagement, vital to creating a practical, inclusive, and implementable set of recommendations.

The Rural Lands Report will include topics:

- Plan Review
  - Goals, policies, and strategies within the Rural and Resource Lands chapter of the Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan
  - Salmon recovery plans and related planning efforts
  - Land use plans, including the Great Peninsula Conservancy Conservation Plan, supporting studies, and cross-jurisdictional plans related to land use
- Data Compilation and Assessment
- Identification of Patterns and Priorities
- Development of an Analytical Framework for Rural Lands
- Policy and Program Development or Revitalization and Recommendations
- Development of Outreach, Engagement, and Education Tools

### 3 Roles and Responsibilities

#### 3.1 Project Team

Name	Organization	Role	Responsibility
Rafe Wysham	Kitsap County	Planning Director	Awareness and connection with the public and Board of County Commissioners
Scott Diener	Kitsap County	Planning Manager	Awareness and support cross-division collaboration
Jim Rogers	Kitsap County	Project Overview	Awareness, connection to DCD leadership, and provide support
Heather Cleveland	Kitsap County	Project Lead	RLA – Project Leadership
Jason Robert Walsh	Kitsap County	Project Manager	Salmon Recovery PM
Daria Etchings	Kitsap County	Project Support	Outreach specialist, website, newsletters, education, outreach
Dalia Barber	Kitsap County	Project Support	Research, outreach, data review
Cindy Read	Kitsap County	GIS and Data Analyst	Data and GIS support
Alicia Adler	Kitsap County	Project Support	Communications & Outreach Coordinator
Consultants	ESA	Technical Lead	Technical engagement tools, 1-2 outreach events

### 3.2 Engagement Matrix

Engagement Group	Project Phase & Responsibility			
	Phase 1 Awareness	Phase 2 Feedback and Discussion	Phase 3 Framework Development	Phase 4 Recommendation Development
Salmon Recovery Team	Grant partnership, project overview	Provide direction salmon recovery plans and data and land use	Provide specific feedback on analyses framework and deliverables for Rural Lands Analysis	Provide specific feedback on policies, programs and recommendations for action for Salmon Recovery Report
Internal Review Team	Project overview and milestones	Informed on project progress, input or further connection as needed	Informed on project progress, input or further connection as needed	Informed on policies, programs, and recommendations
Technical Advisory Committee	Project overview and milestones	Provide specific data and direction feedback	Provide specific feedback on analyses framework and deliverables for Rural Lands Analysis	Provide specific feedback on policies, programs and recommendations for action for Rural Lands Report
Planning Commission	Project overview and milestones	Project update – provide questions and input	Project update- provide questions and input	Project update- provide questions and input
Board of County Commissioners	Project overview and milestones	Project update- provide questions and input	Project update- provide questions and input	Project update- provide questions and input
Community Advisory Councils	Project purpose, promote open house and survey	Project update	Project update	Project update, promote open house
Public	Project purpose, promote open, house and survey	Feedback on project direction through open house and survey	Project update	Feedback on draft Salmon Recovery Report and Rural Lands Report through open house

## 4 Team, Committees, and Working Groups

### 4.1 Internal Review Team (IRT)

The project will use an integrated, interdisciplinary team approach and establish an Internal Review Team (IRT) to keep Kitsap County departments connected and informed. The IRT will include representatives from relevant Kitsap County departments and will provide oversight, stay informed on project progress, and offer input and advice, as appropriate, at key milestones, including scope, analysis, policy development, and recommendations.

Potential IRT members may include:

<b>Kitsap County Dept or Program</b>	<b>Contact</b>	<b>Role/Connection</b>
Long Range Planning	Heather Cleveland	Facilitator
Long Range Planning	Jason Walsh	Facilitator
Planning	Scott Diener	Leadership
Long Range Planning	Jim Rogers	Leadership
Current Planning	Darren Gurnee	Environment/Permitting
Environmental Programs	Kirvie Mesebeluu-Yobech	KNRAMP, Salmon Recovery
Noxious Weeds Program	Jade Jarvis	Noxious Weed Mapping
Building, Fire, and Safety	David Lynam	Forestry/WUI, Emergency Evacuation
Public Works	Chris Piercy	Community Connectivity
Public Works	Michelle Perdue	Stormwater
Parks	Alex Wisniewski	Conservation, Recreation
Emergency Management	Jan Glarum	Emergency Evacuation

### 4.2 Salmon Recovery Team

In collaboration with West Sound Partners for Ecosystem Recovery (WSPER) and Hood Canal Coordinating Council (HCCC), review local salmon recovery plans, and identify strategies that intersect with rural land use, habitat protection, and conservation priorities. Collaboratively, research and compile an inventory of existing data with sources, dates, methodology, and limitations as a baseline for creating the analysis framework and methodology.

Facilitated by Jason Walsh, Salmon Recovery in Local Planning Project Manager, Kitsap County Department of Community development and supported by Heather Cleveland, Rural Lands Analysis Project Lead, Kitap County Department of Community Development.

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Contact(s)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<a href="#">West Sound Partners for Ecosystems Recovery</a>	Brittany Gordon	Salmon Recovery Plan
<a href="#">Hood Canal Coordinating Council</a>	Alicia Olivas	Salmon Recovery Plan
ESA Consulting	Susan O’Neil, Kara Nelson	Resource and data inventory, GIS analysis, and recommendation development

#### 4.3 Technical Advisory Committee

The project will form a technical advisory committee comprised of a cross section of interests in rural lands including preservation, conservation, working lands, and development. The Salmon Recovery Team will be aware of the meeting with optional attendance.

Facilitated by Heather Cleveland, Long Range Planner, Kitap County Department of Community Development.

<b>Organization</b>	<b>Contact(s)</b>	<b>Notes</b>
<a href="#">Great Peninsula Conservancy</a>	Monica Montgomery	Conservation Plan, WUI 15 Project
<a href="#">Kitsap Public Health</a>	John Kiess, Rudy Baum	Water, Public Health
Kitsap Environmental Coalition	Beverly Parsons	Parks, Wildlife Corridor
Kitsap Conservation District	Diane Fish	Agriculture, Conservation
Skokomish Tribe	Bruce Weiskotten	Salmon Recovery Grant Project
Other representation TBD	--	--

#### 4.4 Forestry Working Group

The project will form a forestry working group to discuss key forestry issues including policy, land use, and economic opportunities as it relates to working lands and rural and resource lands.

Facilitated by Heather Cleveland, Long Range Planner, Kitap County Department of Community Development, and Kevin Ceder, Stewardship Forester, Kitsap County Parks Department.

<b>Organization/Sector</b>	<b>Notes</b>
Industrial	Forest Land Owner
Nonindustrial	Forest Land Owner
Land Conservation	Forest Land Owner
WA Department of Natural Resources	Forest Land Owner
Christmas Tree Farm	Forest Land Owner

Suquamish Tribe	Forest Land Owner
Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe	Forest Land Owner
Environment	--
Real Estate	--
Other representation TBD	--

#### 4.5 Partner Meetings

The project will also engage an integrated network of stakeholders representing rural and resource lands through the inclusion of advisory groups and working partnerships. This will include coordination with the Kitsap County Agriculture Advisory Council, Tribal Coordination meetings, and other partner presentations.

These groups will serve to keep key constituencies connected and informed, while offering subject-matter insight, practical perspective, and advisory input at key milestones, including scope, analysis, policy development, and recommendations.

### 5 Outreach and Engagement Approach

The County is committed to providing multiple opportunities for the public and stakeholders to engage in various phases of the project. The County will take advantage of various modes of communication to inform the public including social media, web presence, and email distribution lists. Meetings will be held virtually or in-person with a virtual option (hybrid).

The following tools will be employed to achieve widespread and ongoing involvement.

#### 5.1 Project Website

[https://www.kitsap.gov/dcd/Pages/Rural\\_Lands\\_Analysis.aspx](https://www.kitsap.gov/dcd/Pages/Rural_Lands_Analysis.aspx)

The Rural Lands Analysis webpage is where interested residents and community members may visit for status updates, draft documents, and other project information. The webpage will be the primary repository of all information related to the Rural Lands Analysis and the Salmon Recovery in Local Planning projects.

#### 5.2 Teams, Committees, Partners, and Working Groups

**Salmon Recovery Team.** The Salmon Recovery Team (SRT) will meet at least four times throughout the project. The SRT will provide and discuss existing plans, studies, and data related to salmon recovery; review recommendations related to land use, policies, and programs for further analysis; help inform the analytical framework; and provide feedback on project findings and recommendations.

**Internal Review Team.** An Internal Review Team (IRT), composed of Kitsap County staff from departments and divisions engaged in work affecting unincorporated Kitsap County, will support coordination and review throughout the project. The IRT will assist with scope refinement, data

and analysis review, code update review, review of goals, policies, and strategies, and review of the final report. The IRT will meet at least four times throughout the project.

**Technical Advisory Committee.** A Technical Advisory Committee (TAC), composed of individuals representing a cross-section of expertise, perspectives, and interests, will be formed to provide feedback on the rural lands analysis. The TAC will help review and inform the analytical framework, findings, and development of policy and program recommendations that support actionable next steps. The TAC will meet at least four times throughout the project.

**Ad-Hoc Forestry Working Group.** To support meaningful dialogue around the future of working forests and resource lands, an ad-hoc Forestry Working Group will be formed as part of the Rural Lands Analysis. The Working Group will serve as a collaborative forum for stakeholders, community members, industry representatives, and County staff to discuss the role of working forests and the timber industry in Kitsap County, explore alternatives to current conditions, and identify opportunities to support long-term forest management and sustainable practices. The Working Group will help inform discussions related to forestry policy, land use, and economic opportunities while providing input on the future use, management, and stewardship of resource lands as part of the Rural Lands Analysis process.

### 5.3 Survey

An online public survey will be conducted to gather feedback on the data inventory, identified patterns and priorities, and the analytical framework. The survey will be hosted online, with links distributed through digital and print flyers as well as the project website. It will also be promoted at a project kick-off open house to encourage participation. The survey will include a project overview, goals, and anticipated outcomes, and will solicit input on key rural and resource lands topics. Optional demographic questions will be included to help understand the audience reached.

### 5.4 Open House Events

Up to two open houses will be offered for the general community. These events may be virtual, or hybrid.

1. The first open house will be held early in the project, likely in late June or early July, to share the scope of the project, invite questions and comments, and promote the survey.
2. The second open house will be held in February or March, when the Rural Lands Report is available in draft form. This event will present proposed policies, programs, and recommendations for review and feedback, and will encourage public comment on the draft.

## 5.5 Community Consultations

### 5.5.1 Presentations and Invitations

Project information will be shared with the Community Advisory Councils to promote the Project Kick-off Open House in June/July and the survey – with an offer for a project presentation in the future. The County will also present to identified Community Groups (e.g. Seabeck Community Group), and any other Community Groups if requested.

Community Advisory Councils include:

- Manchester CAC – Meets at Manchester Library
- Central KCC – Meets at Central Kitsap Fire & Rescue HQ
- Suquamish CAC – Meets at Suquamish United Church of Christ
- Kingston CAC – Meets at Village Green Community Center

### 5.5.2 Interviews

Interviews with specific stakeholders may also be held to help refine the understanding of the project’s needs and provide subject matter expertise on elements identified by the project team, IRT or during presentation or public meetings. Additional outreach will be facilitated with Tribes during regularly scheduled Tribal Partner Meetings. Determination of targeted outreach needs will be reviewed during the Salmon Recovery Team, IRT, TAC, and project team meetings and at key decision points in the project.

### 5.5.3 Outreach List

The following table shows examples of community groups or individuals outside of the standard County contact list that may receive direct contact as part of the County’s outreach efforts.

- Agriculture Advisory Council
- Puget Sound Energy
- Naval Base Kitsap
- Great Peninsula Conservancy
- Kitsap Environmental Coalition
- Kitsap Environmental Consortium
- Others as identified during the project

## 5.6 Educational Materials

Educational materials such as print and digital flyers will be posted digitally and physically at key locations within the community to inform the public about upcoming meetings, survey, and public comment opportunities.

The flyers will include the meeting location, date and time, overview of meeting topics, and a QR code and link to the project website. Digital flyers will be posted to the county’s social media pages. Print flyers may be posted at the following locations:

### **Kitsap Regional Libraries**

- Bremerton-Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.
- Bremerton-Sylvan Way
- Kingston
- Little Boston
- Manchester
- Port Orchard
- Poulsbo
- Silverdale
- Bainbridge Island

### **Volunteer/Community Libraries**

- Seabeck
- Tracyton
- Bangor Navy Base Library

### **Community Centers**

- Village Green Community Center
- Givens Community Center
- Silverdale YMCA
- Hansville Grocery or Hansville USPS
- Seabeck General Store
- Olalla Bay Market & Landing
- Port Gamble USPS (or vicinity)

## **5.7 Notifications**

The County will develop notification materials including press releases, email notification, and social media advertisements to ensure broad participation. Notifications will also be sent via the “Gov Delivery” system, and the County may inform media outlets of the project.

Members of the community will be able to sign up for electronic noticing (GovDelivery) by visiting the County’s project webpage. Notices will provide general information about the project, contact information for providing feedback, and times of open house events and presentations.

The project website will be regularly updated, including posting official notices prior to open house events before the Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners presentations.

## **5.8 Public Feedback**

There will be multiple opportunities for community members to provide input throughout the project, including early engagement opportunities intended to help shape the scope and direction of the work, as well as formal public comment periods focused on review of draft materials.

### 5.9 Planning Commission and Board of County Commissioners

This project will not include formal hearings or the development of Findings of Fact. Instead, the Department of Community Development will provide regular briefings and conduct work study meetings with the Board of County Commissioners and the County’s Planning Commission throughout the project to share progress, gather input, and refine materials. These meetings will be open to the public, consistent with applicable requirements under Kitsap County Code.

## 6 Inclusive Outreach

To reach a broad range of demographic groups, the County will offer consultations with community organizations.

The County will also encourage participation from younger residents in surveys, events, meetings, and formal public comment opportunities.

In accordance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), the County is committed to providing accommodations for individuals with disabilities. Listening devices are available for in-person meetings held in the Board of County Commissioners’ Chambers, and live captioning is provided for virtual meetings conducted via Zoom.

Requests for ADA accommodations or materials in accessible formats, including for individuals with visual impairments, may be made using the contact information provided below.

Organization	Contact information
Kitsap County Department of Community Development	Tina Rice 360-337-5777 <a href="mailto:TRice@co.kitsap.wa.us">TRice@co.kitsap.wa.us</a>
Kitsap County Commissioners Office	360-337-7080 <a href="mailto:kitsapcommissioners@co.kitsap.wa.us">kitsapcommissioners@co.kitsap.wa.us</a>
Kitsap 1	360.337.5777 Help@kitsap1.com

## 7 Engagement Timeline

The plan ensures continuous, early engagement and outreach throughout the project. The outreach process will be carried out in four phases:

