



Community Development

2026-2027 Rural Lands Analysis & Salmon Recovery in Local Planning

Project Charter

Updated: May 11, 2026

Author and Review

- Prepared by
 - Heather Cleveland, AICP, Long Range Planner
 - Jason Walsh, Long Range Planner
- Reviewed by
 - Jim Rogers, Long Range Planning Supervisor – May 12, 2026

Table of Contents

Executive Summary	3
Project Purpose.....	4
Project Background and Framework.....	4
Approach.....	6
Internal Review Team	7
Outcomes	7
State and Regional Outcomes.....	7
Local Outcomes	7
Deliverables.....	7
Scope of Work.....	8
Project Schedules	9
Rural Lands Analysis	9
Salmon Recovery in Local Planning	11
Roles and Responsibilities	16
Organization and Internal Communication	17
Organization and External Communication	17
Conclusion	18
Attachment A: Community Engagement Plan	19
Attachment B: Washington State Department of Commerce Grant Contract.....	19
Attachment C: Environmental Science Associates Contract	19

Executive Summary

Project Purpose

To analyze existing rural land use patterns, policies, and regulatory frameworks in unincorporated Kitsap County along with existing regional salmon conservation planning work to provide a clear analytical foundation for rural planning decisions that integrate salmon recovery principles.

Key milestones

- May 2026 – Project Charter, Community Engagement Plan, and Project Kick-off
- August 2026 – 30% Project Update
- December 2026 – Data Analysis Complete: 60% Project Update
- January 2027 – Policy Recommendation Phase
- April 2027 – 90% Project Update
- June 2027 – Final Report

Community Engagement

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.

Conclusion

The Rural Lands Analysis and Salmon Recovery in Local Planning work will develop a clear analytical foundation for rural planning decisions that integrate salmon recovery principals with the County's long-range planning framework. This integration will strengthen the County's environmental stewardship as part of its work to improve the ecological health of the County, while preserving its rural character and building community resilience. The results of the Rural Lands Analysis and Salmon Recovery in Local Planning work will improve alignment between policy development, planning decisions, and state planning guidance in the rural areas of the County.

Project Purpose

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 from 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.

Project Background and Framework

The Washington State Growth Management Act (GMA) requires counties to periodically review and update Comprehensive Plans and implement development regulations (RCW 36.70A.130). Comprehensive Plans establish long-range policy direction for land use, housing, transportation, capital facilities, rural areas, and natural resource lands (RCW 36.70A.070).

Kitsap County's rural areas face evolving pressures related to balancing housing needs, economic change, infrastructure capacity, and the need for environmental stewardship. At the same time, state law emphasizes preservation of rural character and support for rural-based economies (RCW 36.70A.070(5); RCW 36.70A.011).

The Rural Lands Analysis will provide a structured, data-driven assessment of rural conditions and trends to support consistency with:

- GMA requirements and state guidance
- Puget Sound Regional Council Vision 2050
- Kitsap Countywide Planning Policies
- The adopted Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan

The analysis also provides context for reviewing rural land use reclassification requests processed pursuant to Kitsap County Code Title 21, including Chapters 21.08 and 21.108.

While the Comprehensive Plan periodic update relies on the Buildable Lands Report and Land Capacity Analysis—focused primarily on population, employment, and housing growth within Urban Growth Areas—the Year of the Rural project highlighted important gaps. In particular, the review of rural-to-rural reclassification requests to increase density underscored the need for additional analysis and tools to better prioritize lands for conservation and preservation, while also identifying appropriate incentive-based approaches to support rural development.



Salmon Recovery in Local Planning

As development pressures increase, the County faces growing challenges in balancing growth with the protection of rural and resource lands. In particular, gaps remain in clearly prioritized conservation and preservation areas, along with limited tools to effectively safeguard ecological functions while accommodating development. The *Salmon Recovery in Local Planning* project is a component of the broader Rural Lands Analysis and focuses on integrating salmon recovery goals, strategies, and priorities into local land use planning to strengthen ecological health, rural character, and long-term community resilience.

Building on prior efforts such as natural asset management and stream mapping updates, this work will provide a Salmon Recovery Report that strengthens the scientific and policy foundation for rural land management, ensuring that comprehensive planning aligns with both GMA objectives and salmon recovery priorities.

April 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SRLP: Execute consultant contract • Prepare project charter and community engagement plan
May 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project kick-off • Project website
August 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 30% Project update • Collaboration with WSPER and HCCC • Spreadsheet of data inventory
December 2026	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 60% Project update • SRLP technical memo • Existing conditions analysis and story map • Observations and analysis framework with methodology memo • Analysis and conclusions memo
April 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90% project update • Draft SRLP report • Draft RLA report
June 2027	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • GIS tool • Final SRLP report • Final RLA report

Table 1 Rural Lands Analysis & Salmon Recovery in Local Planning Timeline

Approach

The project will be completed through a phased and iterative approach that integrates technical analysis, policy review, and engagement.

Key components include:

- Inventory and evaluation of existing data, plans, and regulations
- Development of a Rural Lands Analysis framework comparable in rigor to the County’s Land Capacity Analysis, but tailored to rural conditions
- Identification of trends, constraints, opportunities, and policy implications
- Ongoing engagement and education to inform analysis and decision-making
- Iterative review with internal staff and advisory bodies

The approach emphasizes transparency, consistency with adopted policy, and alignment between analysis, recommendations, and implementation tools.

Internal Review Team

See [Community Engagement Plan](#)

Outcomes

State and Regional Outcomes

- Support compliance with GMA requirements and state planning guidance
- Maintain consistency with regional growth strategies and countywide planning policies

Local Outcomes

- A clear, documented understanding of rural land use patterns and trends
- Policy-relevant analysis to support rural planning decisions
- Improved alignment between rural policies, mapping, and development regulations
- Increased clarity and predictability for rural land use decision-making
- Enhanced public understanding of rural planning issues and tradeoffs

Deliverables

Existing Data Inventory and Technical Memorandum

An inventory and review of existing data, plans, reports, and regulations related to rural and resource lands. The memorandum will summarize key findings, identify data gaps, and establish a consistent baseline for analysis.

Rural Lands Analysis Report and Framework

A comprehensive Rural Lands Analysis comparable in purpose and rigor to the Land Capacity Analysis, tailored to rural land use patterns, policies, and infrastructure considerations. The framework will guide evaluation of rural land distribution, development trends, resource lands, and rural character considerations.

Rural Lands Report

A synthesized report translating technical analysis into findings, conclusions, and policy-relevant recommendations. The report will support future updates to the Rural and Resource Lands Chapter, rural land use reclassification review, and potential code updates.

Engagement and Education

Ongoing engagement and education conducted throughout the project to inform analysis, refine recommendations, and improve understanding of rural planning issues.



Salmon Recovery in Local Planning

Aligned with the Rural Lands Analysis deliverables are the Salmon Recovery in Local Planning Deliverables that are part of the grant awarded by the Washington Department of Commerce.

Scope of Work

The project scope includes, but is not limited to:

- Review of existing rural and resource lands policies and plans
- Inventory and analysis of rural land use patterns and distributions
- Evaluation of rural housing types and trends
- Review of rural economies and rural-serving land uses
- Assessment of public facilities, services, and infrastructure in rural areas
- Identification of focus areas and emerging issues
- Development of analytical frameworks and metrics
- Preparation of technical memoranda and summary reports
- Support for rural land use reclassification review
- Identification of potential policy and code considerations

The project does not include adoption of Comprehensive Plan or code amendments but provides analysis and recommendations to support future actions.

Project Schedules

Rural Lands Analysis

Rural Lands Analysis GANTT Chart

	M	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
2026 Rural Lands Analysis - Foundation																
Charter & engagement	█	█	█	█	█	█										
Review existing policies and plans				█	█	█										
Data inventory & baseline analysis				█	█	█										
Framework Development							█	█	█							
Land Use & Resource Inventory							█	█	█							
2026 Rural Lands Analysis – Core Analysis																
Land use patterns and distribution						█	█	█								
Housing types and trends							█	█	█							
Economies and rural-serving land uses								█	█	█						
Public facilities, services, and infrastructure								█	█							
Critical area and wildlife corridor								█	█							
2026 Rural Lands Analysis – Integration & Reporting																
Draft RLA Report									█	█						
Engagement & Education				█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█	█
Final RLA Report										█	█					
Policy Development - 2027																
Policy, Program, Recommendation Development										█	█	█				
Draft Rural Lands Report											█	█	█			
Final Rural Lands Report														█	█	█

Rural Lands Analysis Milestones

- May 2026 – Project Charter, Community Engagement Plan, and Project Kick-off
- August 2026 – 30% Project Update
- December 2026 – Data Analysis Complete: 60% Project Update
- January 2027 – Policy Recommendation Phase
- April 2027 – 90% Project Update
- June 2027 – Final Report

Rural Lands Analysis Deliverables

- Rural Lands Analysis
- Rural Lands Report

Salmon Recovery in Local Planning

Salmon Recovery in Locap Planning GANTT CHART

Month	A	M	J	J	A	S	O	N	D	J	F	M	A	M	J
Task 1: Project Management															
Charter/CEP/Schedule	█	█													
Consultant Contract	█	█													
Task 2: Salmon Recovery Review and Existing Data Inventory															
Salmon Recovery TAC Meetings			█			█			█			█			
Data Inventory Spreadsheet		█	█												
Technical Memo			█	█	█	█									
Task 3: Rural Lands Analysis															
Existing Conditions Analysis & Communication Products			█	█	█										
Observations & Analysis Framework and Methodology Memo					█	█									
Analysis & Conclusions Memo						█	█	█	█	█					
Rural Lands TAC Meetings & Materials Deliverable			█			█			█			█			█
Rural Lands Analysis															█
Task 4: Technical Engagement															
GIS Tool									█	█	█				
Outreach Materials															█
Public Outreach Events				█			█			█			█		
Task 5: Final Report															
Draft Salmon Recovery Report										█	█	█			
Final Salmon Recovery Report												█	█	█	█

Salmon Recovery in Local Planning Milestones

- May 2026 – Project Charter, Community Engagement Plan, and Project Kick-off
- August 2026 – 30% Project Update
- December 2026 – Data Analysis Complete: 60% Project Update
- January 2027 – Policy Recommendation Phase
- April 2027 – 90% Project Update
- June 2027 – Final Report

Salmon Recovery in Local Planning Deliverables

Task #: 1 – Project Administration/Management

Task Description: Kitsap County will execute the Department of Commerce Agreement, including completing project reporting requirements, billing & administration, and deliverables submittal. Kitsap County will develop and execute a subcontract with a consultant.

Deliverables for Task #1, Title: Project Administration/Management

Task Number	Deliverable Description	Due Date
1.1	Develop project plan	May 5, 2026
1.2	Develop & execute contracts as needed	May 5, 2026
1.3	Payment Request / Progress Report (PRPR) (Kitsap)	June 30, 2027
1.4	Final Report	June 2027

Task #: 2 – Local Salmon Recovery Plan Review and Existing Data Inventory

Task Description: Kitsap County, in collaboration with West Sound Partners for Ecosystem Recovery (WSPER) and the Hood Canal Coordinating Council (HCCC), will review local salmon recovery plans and identify strategies that intersect with rural land use, habitat protection, and conservation priorities. Additionally, Kitsap County will research and compile an inventory of existing data with source, dates, methodology and limitations. This review and inventory will be documented along with specific recommendations in a “Salmon Recovery Technical Memo” to inform the Rural Lands Analysis and the Salmon Recovery Report (in Task 5).

Deliverables for Task 2, Title: Salmon Recovery Technical Memo

Task Number	Deliverable Description	End Date
2.1	Meeting materials, including agendas, attendance lists, and meeting summaries from up to 4 meetings each with WSPER and HCCC staff	February 2027

2.2	Spreadsheet of data inventory	August 2026
2.3	Salmon Recovery Technical Memo	February 2027

Task #: 3 – Rural Lands Analysis

Task Description: Kitsap County will conduct a comprehensive Rural Lands Analysis to assess existing conditions across rural and resource lands, focusing on land use patterns, zoning and current use, working lands (agriculture, forestry, mineral), development and infrastructure, ecological conditions, habitat connectivity, and natural resource assets. This task will compile and synthesize data from watershed assessments, stream mapping, Natural Asset datasets, transportation plans, and land use/zoning information to establish a clear picture of current rural land and habitat conditions. Additionally, the existing conditions will be shared and supplemented with educational communication products such as definitions and maps – setting a foundation for subsequent subtasks.

This task will include data-driven observations to identify and analyze patterns, highlight areas of interest or concern, and pinpoint gaps where additional conservation, preservation, or restoration efforts are needed. These observations, along with information obtained from the local salmon recovery plans, will inform a structured analysis of opportunities and challenges for protecting and improving rural character, natural resource assets, and salmon habitat while guiding sustainable rural development.

Throughout completion of the Rural Lands Analysis, Kitsap County will coordinate with staff and consultants throughout the project and coordinate a technical committee with partners to provide updates, assess progress, and provide direction

This task will culminate with completion of the final Rural Lands Analysis, throughout which salmon recovery will be integrated. The Rural Lands Analysis will assess a variety of aspects of rural and resource lands including agriculture, forestry, LAMIRDs, and development, etc. Salmon recovery goals and strategies will be incorporated throughout the document accordingly.

Task Goal Statement: Conduct rural lands analysis with a focus on incorporating salmon recovery plans.

Deliverables for Task 3, Rural Lands Analysis

Task Number	Deliverable Description	End Date
3.1	Existing conditions analysis and communication products (e.g. GIS story map)	September 2026
3.2	Observations and analysis framework and methodology memo	December 2026
3.3	Analysis and conclusions memo	February 2027
3.4	Rural Lands Technical Coordination- up to 15 meetings; meeting materials including agendas, attendance lists, and meeting summaries will be submitted as deliverables.	June 30, 2027
3.5	Rural Lands Analysis	June 30, 2027

Task #: 4 – Outreach, Communication, and Public Engagement

Task Description: Kitsap County will conduct outreach, communication, and public engagement to share project progress and findings, engage stakeholders, and support informed input on rural lands and salmon recovery. These efforts will ensure transparency, foster collaboration, and help integrate community and partner perspectives into the Rural Lands Analysis and Salmon Recovery Report.

Deliverables for Task 4, Title: Geo-Referenced Dataset and Data Integration

Task Number	Deliverable Description	End Date
4.1	Project webpage	June 30, 2027
4.2	GIS tool to share findings and information	June 30, 2027
4.3	Meeting materials from up to 4 outreach meetings (combination of public meetings and targeted outreach). Materials include agendas, presentations, meeting summaries, attendee lists, etc.	June 30, 2027

Task #: 5 – Report and Communicate Results

Task Description: Kitsap County will synthesize findings from all previous tasks to produce a Salmon Recovery Report that documents existing conditions, data-driven observations, and analysis across rural lands and watersheds. The report will identify opportunities to advance salmon recovery through specific policy, program, and code recommendations.

Results will be communicated to the County decision-makers and partners through briefings, presentations, and accessible materials.

Deliverables for Task 5, Title: Report and Communicate Results

Task Number	Deliverable Description	End Date
5.1	Link to interactive web-map	June 30, 2027
5.2	Salmon Recovery Report	June 30, 2027

Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Person	General Responsibilities	Project Responsibilities
DCD Director	Rafe Wysham	DCD coordination, oversight, communication with Board of Commissioners	Review at major milestones
Planning Manager	Scott Diener	Scope, direction, liaison to leadership, staffing and capacity	Review at major milestones, evaluate direction
Program Supervisor	Jim Rogers	Scope, direction, liaison to leadership, staffing and capacity	Review at major milestones, evaluate direction
Project Manager	Jason Robert Walsh	Managing day-to-day project tasks, develop and maintain project relationships, regular progress reports	Outreach engagement, data assessment and analysis coordination, draft policies and recommendations
Project Administrator and Lead	Heather Cleveland	Oversight, big picture, communication with other levels, interim	Review at major milestones, evaluate direction, discuss

		deadlines, accountability to work plans	framework and deliverables
Data Analyst	Cindy Read	Data analysis, maps, and graphics	Compile, inventory and manage data; business analyst; create data hub and story map
Outreach Tech	Daria Etchings		Assist with public engagement planning and implementation; webpage, newsletter, and education material production
Project Intern	Dalia Barber		General support, research assistance, and outreach approach development
Planner	Garrett Ballew	Technical support and review	
Planner	April Gassman	Technical support and review	

Organization and Internal Communication

Project coordination will be led by DCD, with regular communication among project staff and the Internal Review Team. Internal coordination will include:

- Scheduled check-ins and milestone reviews
- Share documentation and data resources
- Cross-departmental collaboration to ensure consistency
- Project updates and review with Program Manager and DCD Director

Clear internal communication protocols will support timely review, issue resolution, and alignment between analysis and policy objectives.

Organization and External Communication

Project coordination will be led by DCD, with regular communication between project staff and project subcontractor, Environmental Science Associates. External coordination will include:

- Scheduled check-ins and deliverables review
- Share documentation and data resources

- Revision and implementation of the Community Engagement Plan

Clear external communication and file sharing protocols will support timely risk analysis, issue resolution, and the development of deliverables.

Conclusion

The Rural Lands Analysis and Salmon Recovery in Local Planning work will develop a clear analytical foundation for rural planning decisions that integrate salmon recovery principals with the County's long-range planning framework. This integration will strengthen the County's environmental stewardship as part of its work to improve the ecological health of the County, while preserving its rural character and building community resilience. The results of the Rural Lands Analysis and Salmon Recovery in Local Planning work will improve alignment between policy development, planning decisions, and state planning guidance in the rural areas of the County.

This work will produce a data inventory resource of existing plans and an analysis of the symmetries and leverage opportunities for the County to take plans and turn them into action. This will require identifying resources, i.e., funding and staffing, that can be utilized and processes, i.e., permitting and reporting, that can be adapted to ensure the project's report recommendations are implemented.

Attachment A: Community Engagement Plan

[Community Engagement Plan](#)

Attachment B: Washington State Department of Commerce Grant Contract

[Washington State Department of Commerce Grant Contract](#)

Attachment C: Environmental Science Associates Contract

[ESA Salmon Recovery in Local Planning Contract](#)