



Pierce County

Office of the County Council

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EXECUTIVE OFFICE

June 27, 2018

WA State Department of Ecology
Attention: Director's Office
PO Box 47600
Olympia, WA 98504-6700

Dear Ms. Bellon,

The County is in receipt of your Agency's Conditional Approval of the Pierce County Shoreline Master Program. By any measure, this has been a tedious effort for all involved.

One area that continues to be of concern to the County relates to the apparent inability to exercise local discretion in certain areas of shoreline management. Pierce County would prefer to prohibit the dumping of dredged material within the State's designated Nisqually Reach Aquatic Reserve due to various factors including the existence of alternative dredged material disposal sites within the County. Pierce County would also prefer to prohibit certain aquaculture activities in proximity to estuaries and within select bays and inlets that are developed with high density residential densities. Obligating the County to accept uses in inappropriate areas that will result in unavoidable impacts and user conflicts is unfortunate.

If Ecology insists on preempting local shoreline management discretion by forcing a County to accept certain uses on state owned aquatic lands based on Agency interpretation of "statewide interests" it should work with the legislature to amend the Shoreline Management Act to that end. When the local government has no real discretion to respond to legitimate concerns raised by our residents, the citizens who elected us lose faith in their government.

Pierce County continues to issue shoreline development permits based on antiquated standards from the 1970s. Our citizens and the environment deserve better. Therefore, the Council is prepared to consider an Ordinance in the second half of 2018 that would amend Pierce County Ordinance No. 2013-45s4 to include the Agency's required changes and many of the recommended changes.

Sincerely,


Douglas G. Richardson
Chair, Pierce County Council

cc: Bruce Dammeier, Pierce County Executive
Dennis Hanberg, Pierce County Planning and Public Works
Perry Lund, Ecology
Kim Van Zwalenburg, Ecology