

**January 30, 2012 Shoreline Stabilization Workshop
Summary of Comments**

Attendance: 16 - signed in

Meeting Goals:

1. Provide information on stabilization issues
2. Collect community input on:
 - Policy changes needed for the SMP update
 - How to address SMP guidelines in regulations

The agenda included an introduction of existing definition of stabilization, Island County regulations, and SMP guidelines, followed by a presentation by Jim Johannessen of Coastal Geologic Services on the nature of Island County shoreline geology and the effects of stabilization of various types on the shoreline.

The following comments were recorded at the workshop.

- Need to identify what sort of soft shore armoring is allowed and where.
- The County is not “user-friendly” when it comes to finding solutions to shoreline stabilization issues. County should help people find solutions.
- Current rules only allow protection of structures, not land, from erosion. Property owners want to protect their land from erosion as well as their buildings.
- Is it possible to set up requirements that material be imported to offset potential sediment supply that is lost due to stabilization?
- Can there be some accommodation for protection of landscaping?
- Are there good examples of “soft” protection of high bluffs, e.g. anchored logs and imported gravel?
- Need to clarify if protection of a septic drain field can be a justification for stabilization- should relocation of the drain field be considered first?
- Protection of shoreline requires limitations on development upstream/inland of shoreline areas, especially effects of vegetation removal and hard surfaces on water infiltration, runoff, and water quality. Can this be ensured, so that shoreline owners are not stuck “holding the bag”? Otherwise, shoreline stabilization may be needed to address these problems.
- There are good examples of stormwater management available that should be used to show shoreline owners and others how to minimize their impacts on the shoreline. One attendee offered to show his approach to stormwater management to anyone who wants to come see it.
- When the County is asked for a variance or other exception from standard requirements like setbacks, the County should be indemnified by the applicant against adverse effects to the subject property or other properties resulting from

- the variance, and there should be notice on title of this indemnification. A bond could be required to cover any adverse effects for some performance period.
- Are there times when it is preferable to remove trees from steep slopes to prevent them from contributing to instability? (Answer by JJ was that the basic preference from a slope stability standpoint is for retaining trees as long as possible. This is based on the fact that tree roots hold the soil in place, but when there is physical evidence that the tree is beginning to pull away from the hillside it makes sense to trim or remove it.)
 - It would be good to clarify whether trees of various species can be trimmed or removed and when that is appropriate. For example, topping alders and allowing them to resprout keeps roots alive but may improve a view.
 - If the objective is to encourage soft armoring over hard armoring, there should be a better mechanism to streamline the process for soft armoring, since both are equally hard to get permits for at this time.
 - Could there be a way to allow fill associated with soft armoring without having to get a conditional use permit?
 - It would be good to have a checklist that would address the basic information needed for simple soft shore stabilization, to facilitate using this method over hard armoring.