

HOUSE BILL 1412

*Providing for a one-year extension for
shoreline master program updates in RCW 90.58.080.*

PROGRAM IMPACTS

Authorizes the Department of Ecology (Ecology) to grant a local government one additional year to complete its shoreline master program (SMP) update, if Ecology determines that the local government is likely to complete the SMP update within the additional year.

Ecology and local governments are finding that more time is needed to complete Shoreline Master Program updates. Granting a one-year extension is one of the provisions of the 2002 settlement agreement by business, environmentalists, Ecology and local governments that resolved the lawsuits filed against Ecology's Shoreline Master Program Guidelines. The state Shoreline Management Act, however, does not include this important provision. The bill formalizes this provision of the settlement agreement into statute.

RESOURCE IMPACTS

No overall increase in SMP update grants to local governments is anticipated from the bill. The bill would allow SMP grants to local governments to be expended over a three-year period rather than the current two-year period; however, the total amount of grant funds would not be affected. The bill will not impact total biennial expenditures for any biennium.

Since SMP updates are already taking at least three years, there is no direct impact on staff resources created by the bill. However, the three-year SMP update process is having an impact on the Shoreland Environmental Assessment (SEA) staff resources. We have a cascading effect, with the SMP updates from the previous cycle in their crucial completion phase (year 3) at the same time that the new round of projects are commencing (year 1.)

WORK PLAN

As explained above, there is no direct impact on program resources created by the bill. The bill formalizes existing practice. To date, every SMP update project is requiring three+ years to complete.

Based on our experience, work plans for the '07-'09 round of SMP grants are projecting three years to complete their work (rather than two). This will provide a

more realistic basis for projecting milestones and expenditures. SEA is also improving mechanisms to track SMP update grants over time, with the intent of accomplishing local adoption of the SMP update within the three-year timeframe.

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