

Chapter 173-27 WAC
Last Update: 8/7/17

SHORELINE MANAGEMENT PERMIT AND ENFORCEMENT PROCEDURES

PART I
PERMITS FOR DEVELOPMENT ON SHORELINES OF THE STATE

WAC 173-27-010 Authority.

The provisions of this part implement the requirements of chapter [90.58](#) RCW, the Shoreline Management Act. Specifically, RCW [90.58.200](#) authorizes the adoption of rules as necessary to implement the provisions of the act and RCW [90.58.140\(3\)](#) requires that the department adopt rules for administration and enforcement of the permit system established by the act.

[Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140\(3\)](#) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-010, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-020 Purpose.

RCW [90.58.140\(3\)](#) requires local governments to establish a program, consistent with rules adopted by the department of ecology, for the administration and enforcement of the permit system for shoreline management. The local program should be integrated with other local government systems for administration and enforcement of land use regulations. It is the intent of these regulations to provide minimum procedural requirements as necessary to comply with statutory requirements while providing latitude for local government to establish procedural systems based on local needs and circumstances. It is also the intent of these regulations to provide for integration of the shoreline permit into a consolidated environmental review and permit process.

This regulation is drafted to also reflect RCW [90.58.050](#) which provides that the Shoreline Management Act is intended to establish a cooperative program between local government and the state. According to this provision, local government shall have the primary responsibility for initiating the planning required by the act and administering the regulatory program of shoreline management consistent with the policy and provisions of the act, whereas the department shall act primarily in a supportive and review capacity with an emphasis on providing assistance to local government and on insuring compliance with the policies and provisions of the Shoreline Management Act.

[Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140\(3\)](#) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-020, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-030 Definitions.

The following definitions shall apply:

- (1) "Act" means chapter [90.58](#) RCW, the Shoreline Management Act of 1971, as amended;
- (2) "Applicable master program" means the master program approved or adopted by the department pursuant to RCW [90.58.090\(6\)](#) or [90.58.190\(4\)](#) prior to acceptance of a complete application by local government;
- (3) "Average grade level" means the average of the natural or existing topography of the portion of the lot, parcel, or tract of real property which will be directly under the proposed building or structure: In the case of structures to be built over water, average grade level shall be the elevation of the ordinary high water mark. Calculation of the average grade level shall be made by averaging the ground elevations at the midpoint of all exterior walls of the proposed building or structure;
- (4) "Conditional use" means a use, development, or substantial development which is classified as a conditional use or is not classified within the applicable master program;
- (5) "Department" means the department of ecology;
- (6) "Development" means a use consisting of the construction or exterior alteration of structures; dredging; drilling; dumping; filling; removal of any sand, gravel, or minerals; bulkheading; driving of piling; placing of obstructions; or any project of a permanent or temporary nature which interferes with the normal public use of

the surface of the waters overlying lands subject to the act at any stage of water level. "Development" does not include dismantling or removing structures if there is no other associated development or redevelopment;

(7) "Exempt" developments are those set forth in WAC [173-27-040](#) and RCW [90.58.030](#) (3)(e), [90.58.140](#)(9), [90.58.147](#), [90.58.355](#), and [90.58.515](#) which are not required to obtain a substantial development permit but which must otherwise comply with applicable provisions of the act and the local master program;

(8) "Fair market value" of a development is the open market bid price for conducting the work, using the equipment and facilities, and purchase of the goods, services and materials necessary to accomplish the development. This would normally equate to the cost of hiring a contractor to undertake the development from start to finish, including the cost of labor, materials, equipment and facility usage, transportation and contractor overhead and profit. The fair market value of the development shall include the fair market value of any donated, contributed or found labor, equipment or materials;

(9) "Height" is measured from average grade level to the highest point of a structure: Provided, That television antennas, chimneys, and similar appurtenances shall not be used in calculating height, except where such appurtenances obstruct the view of the shoreline of a substantial number of residences on areas adjoining such shorelines, or the applicable master program specifically requires that such appurtenances be included: Provided further, That temporary construction equipment is excluded in this calculation;

(10) "Local government" means any county, incorporated city, or town which contains within its boundaries any lands or waters subject to chapter [90.58](#) RCW;

(11) "Natural or existing topography" means the topography of the lot, parcel, or tract of real property immediately prior to any site preparation or grading, including excavation or filling;

(12) "Party of record" includes all persons, agencies or organizations who have submitted written comments in response to a notice of application; made oral comments in a formal public hearing conducted on the application; or notified local government of their desire to receive a copy of the final decision on a permit and who have provided an address for delivery of such notice by mail;

(13) "Permit" means any substantial development, variance, conditional use permit, or revision authorized under chapter [90.58](#) RCW;

(14) "Public interest" means the interest shared by the citizens of the state or community at large in the affairs of government, or some interest by which their rights or liabilities are affected including, but not limited to, an effect on public property or on health, safety, or general welfare resulting from a use or development;

(15) "Structure" means a permanent or temporary edifice or building, or any piece of work artificially built or composed of parts joined together in some definite manner, whether installed on, above, or below the surface of the ground or water, except for vessels;

(16) "Transmit" means to send from one person or place to another by mail or hand delivery. The date of transmittal for mailed items is the date that the document is certified for mailing or, for hand-delivered items, is the date of receipt at the destination;

(17) "Variance" is a means to grant relief from the specific bulk, dimensional or performance standards set forth in the applicable master program and not a means to vary a use of a shoreline;

(18) "Vessel" includes ships, boats, barges, or any other floating craft which are designed and used for navigation and do not interfere with the normal public use of the water;

(19) The definitions and concepts set forth in RCW [90.58.030](#), and chapters [173-20](#), [173-22](#), and [173-26](#) WAC also apply as used in this chapter.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter [90.58](#) RCW. WSR 17-17-016 (Order 15-06), § 173-27-030, filed 8/7/17, effective 9/7/17. Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-030, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-040 Developments exempt from substantial development permit requirement.

(1) Application and interpretation of exemptions.

(a) Exemptions shall be construed narrowly. Only those developments that meet the precise terms of one or more of the listed exemptions may be granted exemption from the substantial development permit process.

(b) An exemption from the substantial development permit process is not an exemption from compliance with the act or the local master program, nor from any other regulatory requirements. To be authorized, all uses and developments must be consistent with the policies and provisions of the applicable master program and the

Shoreline Management Act. A development or use that is listed as a conditional use pursuant to the local master program or is an unlisted use, must obtain a conditional use permit even though the development or use does not require a substantial development permit. When a development or use is proposed that does not comply with the bulk, dimensional and performance standards of the master program, such development or use can only be authorized by approval of a variance.

(c) The burden of proof that a development or use is exempt from the permit process is on the applicant.

(d) If any part of a proposed development is not eligible for exemption, then a substantial development permit is required for the entire proposed development project.

(e) Local government may attach conditions to the approval of exempted developments and/or uses as necessary to assure consistency of the project with the act and the local master program.

(2) The following developments shall not require substantial development permits:

(a) Any development of which the total cost or fair market value, whichever is higher, does not exceed five thousand dollars, if such development does not materially interfere with the normal public use of the water or shorelines of the state. The dollar threshold established in this subsection must be adjusted for inflation by the office of financial management every five years, beginning July 1, 2007, based upon changes in the consumer price index during that time period. "Consumer price index" means, for any calendar year, that year's annual average consumer price index, Seattle, Washington area, for urban wage earners and clerical workers, all items, compiled by the Bureau of Labor and Statistics, United States Department of Labor. The office of financial management must calculate the new dollar threshold and transmit it to the office of the code reviser for publication in the *Washington State Register* at least one month before the new dollar threshold is to take effect. For purposes of determining whether or not a permit is required, the total cost or fair market value shall be based on the value of development that is occurring on shorelines of the state as defined in RCW [90.58.030](#) (2)(c). The total cost or fair market value of the development shall include the fair market value of any donated, contributed or found labor, equipment or materials;

(b) Normal maintenance or repair of existing structures or developments, including damage by accident, fire or elements. "Normal maintenance" includes those usual acts to prevent a decline, lapse, or cessation from a lawfully established condition. "Normal repair" means to restore a development to a state comparable to its original condition, including but not limited to its size, shape, configuration, location and external appearance, within a reasonable period after decay or partial destruction, except where repair causes substantial adverse effects to shoreline resource or environment. Replacement of a structure or development may be authorized as repair where such replacement is the common method of repair for the type of structure or development and the replacement structure or development is comparable to the original structure or development including but not limited to its size, shape, configuration, location and external appearance and the replacement does not cause substantial adverse effects to shoreline resources or environment;

(c) Construction of the normal protective bulkhead common to single-family residences. A "normal protective" bulkhead includes those structural and nonstructural developments installed at or near, and parallel to, the ordinary high water mark for the sole purpose of protecting an existing single-family residence and appurtenant structures from loss or damage by erosion. A normal protective bulkhead is not exempt if constructed for the purpose of creating dry land. When a vertical or near vertical wall is being constructed or reconstructed, not more than one cubic yard of fill per one foot of wall may be used as backfill. When an existing bulkhead is being repaired by construction of a vertical wall fronting the existing wall, it shall be constructed no further waterward of the existing bulkhead than is necessary for construction of new footings. When a bulkhead has deteriorated such that an ordinary high water mark has been established by the presence and action of water landward of the bulkhead then the replacement bulkhead must be located at or near the actual ordinary high water mark. Beach nourishment and bioengineered erosion control projects may be considered a normal protective bulkhead when any structural elements are consistent with the above requirements and when the project has been approved by the department of fish and wildlife;

(d) Emergency construction necessary to protect property from damage by the elements. An "emergency" is an unanticipated and imminent threat to public health, safety, or the environment which requires immediate action within a time too short to allow full compliance with this chapter. Emergency construction does not include development of new permanent protective structures where none previously existed. Where new protective structures are deemed by the administrator to be the appropriate means to address the emergency situation, upon abatement of the emergency situation the new structure shall be removed or any permit which would have

been required, absent an emergency, pursuant to chapter [90.58](#) RCW, these regulations, or the local master program, obtained. All emergency construction shall be consistent with the policies of chapter [90.58](#) RCW and the local master program. As a general matter, flooding or other seasonal events that can be anticipated and may occur but that are not imminent are not an emergency;

(e) Construction and practices normal or necessary for farming, irrigation, and ranching activities, including agricultural service roads and utilities on shorelands, construction of a barn or similar agricultural structure, and the construction and maintenance of irrigation structures including but not limited to head gates, pumping facilities, and irrigation channels: Provided, That a feedlot of any size, all processing plants, other activities of a commercial nature, alteration of the contour of the shorelands by leveling or filling other than that which results from normal cultivation, shall not be considered normal or necessary farming or ranching activities. A feedlot shall be an enclosure or facility used or capable of being used for feeding livestock hay, grain, silage, or other livestock feed, but shall not include land for growing crops or vegetation for livestock feeding and/or grazing, nor shall it include normal livestock wintering operations;

(f) Construction or modification of navigational aids such as channel markers and anchor buoys;

(g) Construction on shorelands by an owner, lessee or contract purchaser of a single-family residence for their own use or for the use of their family, which residence does not exceed a height of thirty-five feet above average grade level and which meets all requirements of the state agency or local government having jurisdiction thereof, other than requirements imposed pursuant to chapter [90.58](#) RCW. "Single-family residence" means a detached dwelling designed for and occupied by one family including those structures and developments within a contiguous ownership which are a normal appurtenance. An "appurtenance" is necessarily connected to the use and enjoyment of a single-family residence and is located landward of the ordinary high water mark and the perimeter of a wetland. On a statewide basis, normal appurtenances include a garage; deck; driveway; utilities; fences; installation of a septic tank and drainfield and grading which does not exceed two hundred fifty cubic yards and which does not involve placement of fill in any wetland or waterward of the ordinary high water mark. Local circumstances may dictate additional interpretations of normal appurtenances which shall be set forth and regulated within the applicable master program. Construction authorized under this exemption shall be located landward of the ordinary high water mark;

(h) Construction of a dock, including a community dock, designed for pleasure craft only, for the private noncommercial use of the owner, lessee, or contract purchaser of single-family and multiple-family residences. A dock is a landing and moorage facility for watercraft and does not include recreational decks, storage facilities or other appurtenances. This exception applies if either:

(i) In salt waters, the fair market value of the dock does not exceed two thousand five hundred dollars; or

(ii) In fresh waters the fair market value of the dock does not exceed:

(A) Twenty thousand dollars for docks that are constructed to replace existing docks, are of equal or lesser square footage than the existing dock being replaced, and are located in a county, city, or town that has updated its master program consistent with the master program guidelines in chapter [173-26](#) WAC as adopted in 2003; or

(B) Ten thousand dollars for all other docks constructed in fresh waters.

However, if subsequent construction occurs within five years of completion of the prior construction, and the combined fair market value of the subsequent and prior construction exceeds the amount specified in either (h)(ii)(A) or (B) of this subsection, the subsequent construction shall be considered a substantial development for the purpose of this chapter.

For purposes of this section salt water shall include the tidally influenced marine and estuarine water areas of the state including the Pacific Ocean, Strait of Juan de Fuca, Strait of Georgia and Puget Sound and all bays and inlets associated with any of the above;

(i) Operation, maintenance, or construction of canals, waterways, drains, reservoirs, or other facilities that now exist or are hereafter created or developed as a part of an irrigation system for the primary purpose of making use of system waters, including return flow and artificially stored groundwater from the irrigation of lands;

(j) The marking of property lines or corners on state-owned lands, when such marking does not significantly interfere with normal public use of the surface of the water;

(k) Operation and maintenance of any system of dikes, ditches, drains, or other facilities existing on September 8, 1975, which were created, developed or utilized primarily as a part of an agricultural drainage or diking system;

(l) Any project with a certification from the governor pursuant to chapter [80.50](#) RCW;

(m) Site exploration and investigation activities that are prerequisite to preparation of an application for development authorization under this chapter, if:

(i) The activity does not interfere with the normal public use of the surface waters;

(ii) The activity will have no significant adverse impact on the environment including but not limited to fish, wildlife, fish or wildlife habitat, water quality, and aesthetic values;

(iii) The activity does not involve the installation of any structure, and upon completion of the activity the vegetation and land configuration of the site are restored to conditions existing before the activity;

(iv) A private entity seeking development authorization under this section first posts a performance bond or provides other evidence of financial responsibility to the local jurisdiction to ensure that the site is restored to preexisting conditions; and

(v) The activity is not subject to the permit requirements of RCW [90.58.550](#);

(n) The process of removing or controlling aquatic noxious weeds, as defined in RCW [17.26.020](#), through the use of an herbicide or other treatment methods applicable to weed control that are recommended by a final environmental impact statement published by the department of agriculture or the department of ecology jointly with other state agencies under chapter [43.21C](#) RCW;

(o) Watershed restoration projects as defined herein. Local government shall review the projects for consistency with the shoreline master program in an expeditious manner and shall issue its decision along with any conditions within forty-five days of receiving all materials necessary to review the request for exemption from the applicant. No fee may be charged for accepting and processing requests for exemption for watershed restoration projects as used in this section.

(i) "Watershed restoration project" means a public or private project authorized by the sponsor of a watershed restoration plan that implements the plan or a part of the plan and consists of one or more of the following activities:

(A) A project that involves less than ten miles of streamreach, in which less than twenty-five cubic yards of sand, gravel, or soil is removed, imported, disturbed or discharged, and in which no existing vegetation is removed except as minimally necessary to facilitate additional plantings;

(B) A project for the restoration of an eroded or unstable stream bank that employs the principles of bioengineering, including limited use of rock as a stabilization only at the toe of the bank, and with primary emphasis on using native vegetation to control the erosive forces of flowing water; or

(C) A project primarily designed to improve fish and wildlife habitat, remove or reduce impediments to migration of fish, or enhance the fishery resource available for use by all of the citizens of the state, provided that any structure, other than a bridge or culvert or instream habitat enhancement structure associated with the project, is less than two hundred square feet in floor area and is located above the ordinary high water mark of the stream.

(ii) "Watershed restoration plan" means a plan, developed or sponsored by the department of fish and wildlife, the department of ecology, the department of natural resources, the department of transportation, a federally recognized Indian tribe acting within and pursuant to its authority, a city, a county, or a conservation district that provides a general program and implementation measures or actions for the preservation, restoration, re-creation, or enhancement of the natural resources, character, and ecology of a stream, stream segment, drainage area, or watershed for which agency and public review has been conducted pursuant to chapter [43.21C](#) RCW, the State Environmental Policy Act;

(p) A public or private project that is designed to improve fish or wildlife habitat or fish passage, when all of the following apply:

(i) The project has been approved in writing by the department of fish and wildlife;

(ii) The project has received hydraulic project approval by the department of fish and wildlife pursuant to chapter [77.55](#) RCW; and

(iii) The local government has determined that the project is substantially consistent with the local shoreline master program. The local government shall make such determination in a timely manner and provide it by letter to the project proponent.

Fish habitat enhancement projects that conform to the provisions of RCW [77.55.181](#) are determined to be consistent with local shoreline master programs, as follows:

(A) In order to receive the permit review and approval process created in this section, a fish habitat enhancement project must meet the criteria under (p)(iii)(A)(I) and (II) of this subsection:

(I) A fish habitat enhancement project must be a project to accomplish one or more of the following tasks:

- Elimination of human-made fish passage barriers, including culvert repair and replacement;
- Restoration of an eroded or unstable streambank employing the principle of bioengineering, including limited use of rock as a stabilization only at the toe of the bank, and with primary emphasis on using native vegetation to control the erosive forces of flowing water; or
- Placement of woody debris or other instream structures that benefit naturally reproducing fish stocks.

The department of fish and wildlife shall develop size or scale threshold tests to determine if projects accomplishing any of these tasks should be evaluated under the process created in this section or under other project review and approval processes. A project proposal shall not be reviewed under the process created in this section if the department determines that the scale of the project raises concerns regarding public health and safety; and

(II) A fish habitat enhancement project must be approved in one of the following ways:

- By the department of fish and wildlife pursuant to chapter [77.95](#) or [77.100](#) RCW;
- By the sponsor of a watershed restoration plan as provided in chapter [89.08](#) RCW;
- By the department as a department of fish and wildlife-sponsored fish habitat enhancement or restoration project;
- Through the review and approval process for the jobs for the environment program;
- Through the review and approval process for conservation district-sponsored projects, where the project complies with design standards established by the conservation commission through interagency agreement with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service and the natural resource conservation service;
- Through a formal grant program established by the legislature or the department of fish and wildlife for fish habitat enhancement or restoration; and
- Through other formal review and approval processes established by the legislature.

(B) Fish habitat enhancement projects meeting the criteria of (p)(iii)(A) of this subsection are expected to result in beneficial impacts to the environment. Decisions pertaining to fish habitat enhancement projects meeting the criteria of (p)(iii)(A) of this subsection and being reviewed and approved according to the provisions of this section are not subject to the requirements of RCW [43.21C.030](#) (2)(c).

(C)(I) A hydraulic project approval permit is required for projects that meet the criteria of (p)(iii)(A) of this subsection and are being reviewed and approved under this section. An applicant shall use a joint aquatic resource permit application form developed by the office of regulatory assistance to apply for approval under this chapter. On the same day, the applicant shall provide copies of the completed application form to the department of fish and wildlife and to each appropriate local government. Local governments shall accept the application as notice of the proposed project. The department of fish and wildlife shall provide a fifteen-day comment period during which it will receive comments regarding environmental impacts. Within forty-five days, the department shall either issue a permit, with or without conditions, deny approval, or make a determination that the review and approval process created by this section is not appropriate for the proposed project. The department shall base this determination on identification during the comment period of adverse impacts that cannot be mitigated by the conditioning of a permit. If the department determines that the review and approval process created by this section is not appropriate for the proposed project, the department shall notify the applicant and the appropriate local governments of its determination. The applicant may reapply for approval of the project under other review and approval processes.

(II) Any person aggrieved by the approval, denial, conditioning, or modification of a permit under this section may formally appeal the decision to the hydraulic appeals board pursuant to the provisions of this chapter.

(D) No local government may require permits or charge fees for fish habitat enhancement projects that meet the criteria of (p)(iii)(A) of this subsection and that are reviewed and approved according to the provisions of this section.

(q) The external or internal retrofitting of an existing structure with the exclusive purpose of compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. Sec. 12101 et seq.) or to otherwise provide physical access to the structure by individuals with disabilities.

WAC 173-27-044 Developments not required to obtain shoreline permits or local reviews.

Requirements to obtain a substantial development permit, conditional use permit, variance, letter of exemption, or other review conducted by a local government to implement this chapter do not apply to the following:

(1) **Remedial actions.** Pursuant to RCW [90.58.355](#), any person conducting a remedial action at a facility pursuant to a consent decree, order, or agreed order issued pursuant to chapter [70.105D](#) RCW, or to the department of ecology when it conducts a remedial action under chapter [70.105D](#) RCW. The department must ensure compliance with the substantive requirements of this chapter through the consent decree, order, or agreed order issued pursuant to chapter [70.105D](#) RCW, or during the department-conducted remedial action, through the procedures developed by the department pursuant to RCW [70.105D.090](#).

(2) **Boatyard improvements to meet NPDES permit requirements.** Pursuant to RCW [90.58.355](#), any person installing site improvements for stormwater treatment in an existing boatyard facility to meet requirements of a national pollutant discharge elimination system stormwater general permit. The department must ensure compliance with the substantive requirements of this chapter through the review of engineering reports, site plans, and other documents related to the installation of boatyard stormwater treatment facilities.

(3) **WSDOT facility maintenance and safety improvements.** Pursuant to RCW [90.58.356](#), department of transportation projects and activities meeting the conditions of RCW [90.58.356](#) are not required to obtain a substantial development permit, conditional use permit, variance, letter of exemption, or other review conducted by a local government to implement the Shoreline Management Act, chapter [90.58](#) RCW.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter [90.58](#) RCW. WSR 17-17-016 (Order 15-06), § 173-27-044, filed 8/7/17, effective 9/7/17.]

WAC 173-27-045 Developments not subject to the Shoreline Management Act.

Certain developments are not required to meet requirements of the Shoreline Management Act as follows:

(1) Pursuant to RCW [90.58.045](#) regarding environmental excellence program agreements, notwithstanding any other provision of law, any legal requirement under the Shoreline Management Act, including any standard, limitation, rule, or order is superseded and replaced in accordance with the terms and provisions of an environmental excellence program agreement, entered into under chapter [43.21K](#) RCW.

(2) The holder of a certification from the governor pursuant to chapter [80.50](#) RCW shall not be required to obtain a permit under chapter [90.58](#) RCW.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter [90.58](#) RCW. WSR 17-17-016 (Order 15-06), § 173-27-045, filed 8/7/17, effective 9/7/17. Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.030](#) (3)(e), [90.58.045](#), [90.58.065](#), [90.58.140](#)(9), [90.58.143](#), [90.58.147](#), [90.58.200](#), [90.58.355](#), [90.58.390](#), [90.58.515](#), [43.21K.080](#), [71.09.250](#), [71.09.342](#), [77.55.181](#), [89.08.460](#), chapters [70.105D](#), [80.50](#) RCW. WSR 07-02-086 (Order 05-12), § 173-27-045, filed 1/2/07, effective 2/2/07.]

WAC 173-27-050 Letter of exemption.

Some projects conducted on shorelines of the state also require review and approval by federal agencies. Ecology is designated as the coordinating agency for the state with regard to permits issued by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The following is intended to facilitate ecology's coordination of local actions, with regard to exempt development, with federal permit review.

(1) The local government shall prepare a letter of exemption, addressed to the applicant and the department, whenever a development is determined by a local government to be exempt from the substantial development permit requirements and the development is subject to one or more of the following federal permit requirements:

(a) A U.S. Army Corps of Engineers section 10 permit under the Rivers and Harbors Act of 1899; (The provisions of section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act generally apply to any project occurring on or over navigable waters. Specific applicability information should be obtained from the Corps of Engineers.) or

(b) A section 404 permit under the Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972. (The provisions of section 404 of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act generally apply to any project which may involve discharge of dredge or fill material to any water or wetland area. Specific applicability information should be obtained from the Corps of Engineers.)

(2) The letter shall indicate the specific exemption provision from WAC [173-27-040](#) that is being applied to the development and provide a summary of the local government's analysis of the consistency of the project with the master program and the act.

(3) Local government may specify other developments not described within subsection (1) of this section as requiring a letter of exemption prior to commencement of the development.

[Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-050, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-060 Applicability of chapter [90.58](#) RCW to federal lands and agencies.

(1) Direct federal agency activities in or affecting Washington's coastal zone shall be consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the enforceable policies of the most recent federally approved Washington state coastal zone management program pursuant to the Federal Coastal Zone Management Act, 16 U.S.C. 1451 et seq. (CZMA) and federal regulations adopted pursuant thereto.

Washington's coastal zone, as established in the state's approved coastal zone management program, includes the following coastal counties: Whatcom, Skagit, San Juan, Island, Snohomish, King, Pierce, Thurston, Mason, Kitsap, Jefferson, Clallam, Grays Harbor, Pacific and Wahkiakum.

The Shoreline Management Act is incorporated into the Washington state coastal zone management program and, thereby, those direct federal agency activities affecting the uses or resources subject to the act must be consistent to the maximum extent practicable with the enforceable provisions of the act, regulations adopted pursuant to the act and the local master program.

(a) When the department receives a consistency determination for an activity proposed by the federal government, it shall request that local government review the proposal and provide the department with its views regarding the consistency of the activity or development project with the enforceable policies of the local master program.

(b) The CZMA federal consistency decision-making process for federal agency activities is prescribed in the Coastal Zone Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1456 (c)(1) and (2), in federal regulations at 15 C.F.R. part 930, subpart C, and in Washington's most recent federally approved CZM program document.

(2) Federal agency activities may be required by other federal laws to meet the permitting requirements of chapter [90.58](#) RCW.

(3) The policies and provisions of chapter [90.58](#) RCW, including the permit system, shall apply statewide to all nonfederal developments and uses undertaken on federal lands and on lands subject to nonfederal ownership, lease or easement, even though such lands may fall within the external boundaries of a federal ownership.

[Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.030](#) (3)(e), [90.58.045](#), [90.58.065](#), [90.58.140](#)(9), [90.58.143](#), [90.58.147](#), [90.58.200](#), [90.58.355](#), [90.58.390](#), [90.58.515](#), [43.21K.080](#), [71.09.250](#), [71.09.342](#), [77.55.181](#), [89.08.460](#), chapters [70.105D](#), [80.50](#) RCW. WSR 07-02-086 (Order 05-12), § 173-27-060, filed 1/2/07, effective 2/2/07. Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-060, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-070 Application of the permit system to substantial development undertaken prior to the effective date of the act.

(1) Substantial development undertaken on the shorelines of the state prior to the effective date of the act, including changes in shoreline jurisdiction as described in subsection (2) of this section, shall not require a permit except under the following circumstances:

(a) When the activity was unlawful prior to the effective date of the act.

(b) When there has been an unreasonable period of dormancy in the project between its inception and the effective date of the act.

- (c) When the development is not completed within two years after the effective date of the act.
- (d) When substantial development occurred prior to the effective date of the act on a shoreline and continued on to a different lake, river or tributary after the effective date, a permit shall be required for the development undertaken after the effective date.
- (e) Substantial development undertaken prior to the effective date of the act shall not continue without a permit into other phases that were not part of the plan being followed at the time construction commenced.
- (2) The effective date of the act is determined by one of the following procedures:
 - (a) When a change in the area subject to the jurisdiction of the act occurs as a result of a determination of jurisdiction by the department based on the provisions of RCW [90.58.030](#) (2)(d) or (e), the effective date of the act shall be the date the department provides written notice of the change to the local government(s) in which the affected area is located.
 - (b) When a change in the area subject to the jurisdiction of the act occurs as a result of an updated shoreline master program that supersedes the jurisdiction lists in chapter [173-18](#), [173-20](#) and [173-22](#) WAC, the effective date of the act shall be the date the department approves the updated master program.

[Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.030](#) (3)(e), [90.58.045](#), [90.58.065](#), [90.58.140](#)(9), [90.58.143](#), [90.58.147](#), [90.58.200](#), [90.58.355](#), [90.58.390](#), [90.58.515](#), [43.21K.080](#), [71.09.250](#), [71.09.342](#), [77.55.181](#), [89.08.460](#), chapters [70.105D](#), [80.50](#) RCW. WSR 07-02-086 (Order 05-12), § 173-27-070, filed 1/2/07, effective 2/2/07. Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-070, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-080 Nonconforming use and development standards.

Local governments typically develop their own approaches to addressing nonconforming use and development. This section is intended to apply if a shoreline master program does not contain locally adopted nonconforming use and development standards. When nonconforming use and development standards do not exist in the applicable master program, the following definitions and standards shall apply.

- (1) Definitions.
 - (a) "Nonconforming use" means an existing shoreline use that was lawfully established prior to the effective date of the act or the applicable master program, but which does not conform to present use regulations due to subsequent changes to the master program.
 - (b) "Nonconforming development" or "nonconforming structure" means an existing structure that was lawfully constructed at the time it was built but is no longer fully consistent with present regulations such as setbacks, buffers or yards; area; bulk; height or density standards due to subsequent changes to the master program.
 - (c) "Nonconforming lot" means a lot that met dimensional requirements of the applicable master program at the time of its establishment but now contains less than the required width, depth or area due to subsequent changes to the master program.
- (2) Nonconforming structures.
 - (a) Structures that were legally established and are used for a conforming use but are nonconforming with regard to setbacks, buffers or yards; area; bulk; height or density may continue as legal nonconforming structures and may be maintained and repaired.
 - (b) Nonconforming structures may be enlarged or expanded provided that said enlargement meets the applicable provisions of the master program. In the absence of other more specific regulations, proposed expansion shall not increase the extent of nonconformity by further encroaching upon or extending into areas where construction would not be allowed for new structures, unless a shoreline variance permit is obtained.
 - (c) Nonconforming single-family residences that are located landward of the ordinary high water mark may be enlarged or expanded in conformance with applicable bulk and dimensional standards by the addition of space to the main structure or by the addition of normal appurtenances as defined in WAC [173-27-040](#) (2)(g) upon approval of a conditional use permit.
 - (d) A structure for which a variance has been issued shall be considered a legal nonconforming structure and the requirements of this section shall apply as they apply to preexisting nonconformities.

(e) In the absence of other more specific regulations, a structure which is being or has been used for a nonconforming use may be used for a different nonconforming use only upon the approval of a conditional use permit. A conditional use permit may be approved only upon a finding that:

- (i) No reasonable alternative conforming use is practical; and
- (ii) The proposed use will be at least as consistent with the policies and provisions of the act and the master program and as compatible with the uses in the area as the preexisting use.

In addition such conditions may be attached to the permit as are deemed necessary to assure compliance with the above findings, the requirements of the master program and the Shoreline Management Act and to assure that the use will not become a nuisance or a hazard.

(f) A nonconforming structure which is moved any distance must be brought as closely as practicable into conformance with the applicable master program and the act.

(g) If a nonconforming development is damaged to an extent not exceeding seventy-five percent of the replacement cost of the original development, it may be reconstructed to those configurations existing immediately prior to the time the development was damaged, provided that application is made for the permits necessary to restore the development within two years of the date the damage occurred.

(3) Nonconforming uses.

(a) Uses that were legally established and are nonconforming with regard to the use regulations of the master program may continue as legal nonconforming uses.

(b) In the absence of other more specific regulations in the master program, such uses shall not be enlarged or expanded, except upon approval of a conditional use permit.

(c) If a nonconforming use is discontinued for twelve consecutive months or for twelve months during any two-year period, the nonconforming rights shall expire and any subsequent use shall be conforming unless reestablishment of the use is authorized through a conditional use permit which must be applied for within the two-year period. Water-dependent uses should not be considered discontinued when they are inactive due to dormancy, or where the use includes phased or rotational operations as part of typical operations. A use authorized pursuant to subsection (2)(e) of this section shall be considered a conforming use for purposes of this section.

(4) Nonconforming lot. A nonconforming lot may be developed if permitted by other land use regulations of the local government and so long as such development conforms to all other requirements of the applicable master program and the act.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter [90.58](#) RCW. WSR 17-17-016 (Order 15-06), § 173-27-080, filed 8/7/17, effective 9/7/17. Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-080, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-085 Moratoria.

(1) Local governments may adopt moratoria or other interim official controls as necessary and appropriate to implement chapter [90.58](#) RCW.

(2) A local government adopting a moratorium or control under this section must:

- (a) Hold a public hearing on the moratorium or control within sixty days of its adoption;
- (b) Adopt detailed findings of fact that include, but are not limited to, justifications for the proposed or adopted actions and explanations of the desired and likely outcomes;

(c) Notify the department of the moratorium or control immediately after its adoption. The notification must specify the time, place, and date of any public hearing required by this subsection;

(d) Provide that all lawfully existing uses, structures, or other development shall continue to be deemed lawful conforming uses and may continue to be maintained, repaired, and redeveloped, so long as the use is not expanded, under the terms of the land use and shoreline rules and regulations in place at the time of the moratorium.

(3) A moratorium or control may be effective for up to six months if a detailed work plan for remedying the issues and circumstances necessitating the moratorium or control is developed and made available for public review. A moratorium or control may be renewed for two six-month periods if the local government complies with subsection (2)(a) of this section before each renewal. If a moratorium or control is in effect on the date a proposed master program or amendment is submitted to the department, the moratorium or control must remain in effect

until the department's final action under RCW [90.58.090](#); however, the moratorium expires six months after the date of submittal if the department has not taken final action.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter [90.58](#) RCW. WSR 17-17-016 (Order 15-06), § 173-27-085, filed 8/7/17, effective 9/7/17.]

WAC 173-27-090 **Time requirements of permit.**

(1) The time requirements of this section shall apply to all substantial development permits and to any development authorized pursuant to a variance or conditional use permit authorized by this chapter. Upon a finding of good cause, based on the requirements and circumstances of the project proposed and consistent with the policy and provisions of the master program and this chapter, local government may adopt different time limits from those set forth in subsections (2) and (3) of this section as a part of action on a substantial development permit.

(2) Construction activities shall be commenced or, where no construction activities are involved, the use or activity shall be commenced within two years of the effective date of a substantial development permit. However, local government may authorize a single extension for a period not to exceed one year based on reasonable factors, if a request for extension has been filed before the expiration date and notice of the proposed extension is given to parties of record on the substantial development permit and to the department.

(3) Authorization to conduct development activities shall terminate five years after the effective date of a substantial development permit. However, local government may authorize a single extension for a period not to exceed one year based on reasonable factors, if a request for extension has been filed before the expiration date and notice of the proposed extension is given to parties of record and to the department.

(4) The effective date of a substantial development permit shall be the date of filing as provided in RCW [90.58.140](#)(6). The permit time periods in subsections (2) and (3) of this section do not include the time during which a use or activity was not actually pursued due to the pendency of administrative appeals or legal actions or due to the need to obtain any other government permits and approvals for the development that authorize the development to proceed, including all reasonably related administrative or legal actions on any such permits or approvals.

(5) Revisions to permits under WAC [173-27-100](#) may be authorized after original permit authorization has expired: Provided, That this procedure shall not be used to extend the original permit time requirements or to authorize substantial development after the time limits of the original permit.

(6) Local government shall notify the department in writing of any change to the effective date of a permit, as authorized by this section, with an explanation of the basis for approval of the change. Any change to the time limits of a permit other than those authorized by RCW [90.58.143](#) as amended shall require a new permit application.

[Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.030](#) (3)(e), [90.58.045](#), [90.58.065](#), [90.58.140](#)(9), [90.58.143](#), [90.58.147](#), [90.58.200](#), [90.58.355](#), [90.58.390](#), [90.58.515](#), [43.21K.080](#), [71.09.250](#), [71.09.342](#), [77.55.181](#), [89.08.460](#), chapters [70.105D](#), [80.50](#) RCW. WSR 07-02-086 (Order 05-12), § 173-27-090, filed 1/2/07, effective 2/2/07. Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-090, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-100 **Revisions to permits.**

A permit revision is required whenever the applicant proposes substantive changes to the design, terms or conditions of a project from that which is approved in the permit. Changes are substantive if they materially alter the project in a manner that relates to its conformance to the terms and conditions of the permit, the master program and/or the policies and provisions of chapter [90.58](#) RCW. Changes which are not substantive in effect do not require approval of a revision.

When an applicant seeks to revise a permit, local government shall request from the applicant detailed plans and text describing the proposed changes.

(1) If local government determines that the proposed changes are within the scope and intent of the original permit, and are consistent with the applicable master program and the act, local government may approve a revision.

(2) "Within the scope and intent of the original permit" means all of the following:

(a) No additional over water construction is involved except that pier, dock, or float construction may be increased by five hundred square feet or ten percent from the provisions of the original permit, whichever is less;

(b) Ground area coverage and height may be increased a maximum of ten percent from the provisions of the original permit;

(c) The revised permit does not authorize development to exceed height, lot coverage, setback, or any other requirements of the applicable master program except as authorized under a variance granted as the original permit or a part thereof;

(d) Additional or revised landscaping is consistent with any conditions attached to the original permit and with the applicable master program;

(e) The use authorized pursuant to the original permit is not changed; and

(f) No adverse environmental impact will be caused by the project revision.

(3) Revisions to permits may be authorized after original permit authorization has expired under RCW [90.58.143](#). The purpose of such revisions shall be limited to authorization of changes which are consistent with this section and which would not require a permit for the development or change proposed under the terms of chapter [90.58](#) RCW, this regulation and the local master program. If the proposed change constitutes substantial development then a new permit is required. Provided, this subsection shall not be used to extend the time requirements or to authorize substantial development beyond the time limits of the original permit.

(4) If the sum of the revision and any previously approved revisions under former WAC [173-14-064](#) or this section violate the provisions in subsection (2) of this section, local government shall require that the applicant apply for a new permit.

(5) The revision approval, including the revised site plans and text consistent with the provisions of WAC [173-27-180](#) as necessary to clearly indicate the authorized changes, and the final ruling on consistency with this section shall be filed with the department. In addition, local government shall notify parties of record of their action.

(6) If the revision to the original permit involves a conditional use or variance, local government shall submit the revision to the department for the department's approval, approval with conditions, or denial, and shall indicate that the revision is being submitted under the requirements of this subsection. The department shall render and transmit to local government and the applicant its final decision within fifteen days of the date of the department's receipt of the submittal from local government. Local government shall notify parties of record of the department's final decision.

(7) The revised permit is effective immediately upon final decision by local government or, when appropriate under subsection (6) of this section, upon final action by the department.

(8) Appeals shall be in accordance with RCW [90.58.180](#) and shall be filed within twenty-one days from the date of receipt of the local government's action by the department or, when appropriate under subsection (6) of this section, the date the department's final decision is transmitted to local government and the applicant. Appeals shall be based only upon contentions of noncompliance with the provisions of subsection (2) of this section. Construction undertaken pursuant to that portion of a revised permit not authorized under the original permit is at the applicant's own risk until the expiration of the appeals deadline. If an appeal is successful in proving that a revision is not within the scope and intent of the original permit, the decision shall have no bearing on the original permit.

[Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.030](#) (3)(e), [90.58.045](#), [90.58.065](#), [90.58.140](#)(9), [90.58.143](#), [90.58.147](#), [90.58.200](#), [90.58.355](#), [90.58.390](#), [90.58.515](#), [43.21K.080](#), [71.09.250](#), [71.09.342](#), [77.55.181](#), [89.08.460](#), chapters [70.105D](#), [80.50](#) RCW. WSR 07-02-086 (Order 05-12), § 173-27-100, filed 1/2/07, effective 2/2/07. Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-100, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-110 Notice required.

(1) Local government shall develop and adopt a system which provides for notification of the public, the department and other agencies with jurisdiction of applications for a shoreline management substantial development, conditional use, or variance permit. Notification pursuant to this section may be carried out as a part of an integrated local permit notification procedure.

(2) The system shall assure that notice of application shall be provided within fourteen days after the determination of completeness as provided in RCW [36.70B.070](#) and WAC [173-27-180](#), and include the following in whatever sequence or format the local government deems appropriate:

(a) The date of application, the date of the notice of completion for the application, and the date of the notice of application;

(b) A description of the proposed project action and a list of the project permits included in the application and, if applicable, a list of any studies requested under RCW [36.70B.070](#), [36.70B.090](#) and WAC [173-27-180](#);

(c) The identification of other permits not included in the application to the extent known by the local government;

(d) The identification of existing environmental documents that evaluate the proposed project, and, if not otherwise stated on the document providing the notice of application, such as a city land use bulletin, the location where the application and any studies can be reviewed;

(e) A statement of the public comment period, which shall be not less than thirty days following the date of notice of application, and statements of the right of any person to comment on the application, receive notice of and participate in any hearings, request a copy of the decision once made, and any appeal rights. A local government may accept public comments at any time prior to the closing of the record of an open record predecision hearing, if any, or, if no open record predecision hearing is provided, prior to the decision on the project permit;

(f) The date, time, place, and type of hearing, if applicable and scheduled at the date of notice of the application;

(g) A statement of the preliminary determination, if one has been made at the time of notice, of those development regulations that will be used for project mitigation and of consistency; and

(h) Any other information determined appropriate by the local government.

(3) If an open record predecision hearing, as defined in RCW [36.70B.020](#), is required for the requested project permits, the notice of application shall be provided at least fifteen days prior to the open record hearing.

(4) The notification system shall assure that notice to the general public and property owners in the vicinity of such application is given by at least one of the following methods:

(a) Mailing of the notice to the latest recorded real property owners as shown by the records of the county assessor within at least three hundred feet of the boundary of the property upon which the development is proposed;

(b) Posting of the notice in a conspicuous manner on the property upon which the project is to be undertaken; or

(c) Any other manner deemed appropriate by local authorities to accomplish the objectives of reasonable notice to adjacent landowners and the public.

(5) The notification system shall provide for timely notification of individuals and organizations that request such notice in writing.

(6) The notification system shall provide notice to all agencies with jurisdiction per chapter [43.21C](#) RCW and to all other agencies that request in writing any such notice.

[Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-110, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-120 Special procedures for limited utility extensions and bulkheads.

(1) An application for a substantial development permit for a limited utility extension or for the construction of a bulkhead or other measures to protect a single-family residence and its appurtenant structures from shoreline erosion shall be subject to all of the requirements of this chapter except that the following time periods and procedures shall be used:

(a) The public comment period shall be twenty days. The notice provided shall state the manner in which the public may obtain a copy of the local government decision on the application no later than two days following its issuance;

(b) The local government shall issue its decision to grant or deny the permit within twenty-one days of the last day of the comment period specified in subsection (2)(a) of this section; and

(c) If there is an appeal of the decision to grant or deny the permit to the local government legislative authority, the appeal shall be finally determined by the legislative authority within thirty days.

(2) For purposes of this section, a limited utility extension means the extension of a utility service that:

(a) Is categorically exempt under chapter [43.21C](#) RCW for one or more of the following: Natural gas, electricity, telephone, water, or sewer;

(b) Will serve an existing use in compliance with this chapter; and

(c) Will not extend more than two thousand five hundred linear feet within the shorelines of the state.

[Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-120, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-125 Special procedures for WSDOT projects.

(1) Permit review time for projects on a state highway. Pursuant to RCW [47.01.485](#), the legislature established a target of ninety days review time for local governments.

(2) Optional process allowing construction to commence twenty-one days after date of filing. Pursuant to RCW [90.58.140](#), Washington state department of transportation projects that address significant public safety risks may begin twenty-one days after the date of filing if all components of the project will achieve no net loss of shoreline ecological functions.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter [90.58](#) RCW. WSR 17-17-016 (Order 15-06), § 173-27-125, filed 8/7/17, effective 9/7/17.]

WAC 173-27-130 Filing with department.

(1) All applications for a permit or a permit revision shall be submitted to the department by return receipt requested mail upon a final decision by local government. Final decision by local government shall mean the order or ruling, whether it be an approval or denial, which is established after all local administrative appeals related to the permit have concluded or the opportunity to initiate such appeals have lapsed.

(2) When a substantial development permit and a conditional use or variance permit are required for a development, the submittal on the permits shall be made concurrently.

(3) A complete submittal shall consist of the following documents and information:

(a) A copy of the complete application pursuant to WAC [173-27-180](#);

(b) Findings and conclusions that establish the basis for the decision including, but not limited to, identification of shoreline environment designation, applicable master program policies and regulations and the consistency of the project with appropriate review criteria for the type of permit(s) as established in WAC [173-27-140](#) through [173-27-170](#);

(c) The final decision of the local government;

(d) The permit data sheet required by WAC [173-27-190](#); and

(e) Where applicable, local government shall also file the applicable documents required by chapter [43.21C](#) RCW, the State Environmental Policy Act, or in lieu thereof, a statement summarizing the actions and dates of such actions taken under chapter [43.21C](#) RCW.

(4) When the project has been modified in the course of the local review process, plans or text shall be provided to the department that clearly indicate the final approved plan.

(5) Submittal of substantial development permits, conditional use permits, variances, rescissions and revisions is complete when all of the documents required pursuant to subsections (3) and (4) of this section have been received by the department. If the department determines that the submittal does not contain all of the documents and information required by this section, the department shall identify the deficiencies and so notify local government and the applicant in writing. Ecology will not act on conditional use permit or variance submittal until the material requested in writing is submitted to the department.

(6) "Date of filing" of a local government final decision involving approval or denial of a substantial development permit is the date of actual receipt by the department of a local government's final decision on the permit.

(7) "Date of filing" involving approval or denial of a variance or conditional use permit, is the date of transmittal of the department's final decision on the variance or conditional use permit to local government and the applicant.

(8) Date of filing for a substantial development permit transmitted simultaneously with a shoreline conditional use permit or variance, or both, has the same meaning as subsection (7) of this section.

(9) The department shall notify the local government and applicant of the date of filing by telephone or electronic means, followed by written communication, to ensure that the applicant has received the full written decision.

(10) Any decision on an application for a permit under the authority of this section, whether it is an approval or a denial, shall, concurrently with the transmittal of the ruling to the applicant, be filed with the department and the attorney general.

(11) When a permit has been appealed pursuant to RCW [90.58.180](#), upon conclusion of all review proceedings, a copy of the final order shall be provided by the local government to the department. When the project has been modified in the course of the review proceeding, plans or text shall be provided to the local government, consistent with the provisions of WAC [173-27-180](#), that clearly indicate the final approved plan and the local government shall reissue the permit accordingly and submit a copy of the reissued permit and supporting documents consistent with subsection (3) of this section to the department for completion of the file on the permit. The purpose of this provision is to assure that the local and department files on the permit are complete and accurate and not to provide a new opportunity for appeal of the permit.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter [90.58](#) RCW. WSR 17-17-016 (Order 15-06), § 173-27-130, filed 8/7/17, effective 9/7/17. Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.030](#) (3)(e), [90.58.045](#), [90.58.065](#), [90.58.140](#)(9), [90.58.143](#), [90.58.147](#), [90.58.200](#), [90.58.355](#), [90.58.390](#), [90.58.515](#), [43.21K.080](#), [71.09.250](#), [71.09.342](#), [77.55.181](#), [89.08.460](#), chapters [70.105D](#), [80.50](#) RCW. WSR 07-02-086 (Order 05-12), § 173-27-130, filed 1/2/07, effective 2/2/07. Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-130, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-140 Review criteria for all development.

(1) No authorization to undertake use or development on shorelines of the state shall be granted by the local government unless upon review the use or development is determined to be consistent with the policy and provisions of the Shoreline Management Act and the master program.

(2) No permit shall be issued for any new or expanded building or structure of more than thirty-five feet above average grade level on shorelines of the state that will obstruct the view of a substantial number of residences on areas adjoining such shorelines except where a master program does not prohibit the same and then only when overriding considerations of the public interest will be served.

[Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-140, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-150 Review criteria for substantial development permits.

(1) A substantial development permit shall be granted only when the development proposed is consistent with:

(a) The policies and procedures of the act;

(b) The provisions of this regulation; and

(c) The applicable master program adopted or approved for the area. Provided, that where no master program has been approved for an area, the development shall be reviewed for consistency with the provisions of chapter [173-26](#) WAC, and to the extent feasible, any draft or approved master program which can be reasonably ascertained as representing the policy of the local government.

(2) Local government may attach conditions to the approval of permits as necessary to assure consistency of the project with the act and the local master program.

[Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-150, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-160 Review criteria for conditional use permits.

The purpose of a conditional use permit is to provide a system within the master program which allows flexibility in the application of use regulations in a manner consistent with the policies of RCW [90.58.020](#). In authorizing a conditional use, special conditions may be attached to the permit by local government or the department to prevent undesirable effects of the proposed use and/or to assure consistency of the project with the act and the local master program.

- (1) Uses which are classified or set forth in the applicable master program as conditional uses may be authorized provided that the applicant demonstrates all of the following:
 - (a) That the proposed use is consistent with the policies of RCW [90.58.020](#) and the master program;
 - (b) That the proposed use will not interfere with the normal public use of public shorelines;
 - (c) That the proposed use of the site and design of the project is compatible with other authorized uses within the area and with uses planned for the area under the comprehensive plan and shoreline master program;
 - (d) That the proposed use will cause no significant adverse effects to the shoreline environment in which it is to be located; and
 - (e) That the public interest suffers no substantial detrimental effect.
- (2) In the granting of all conditional use permits, consideration shall be given to the cumulative impact of additional requests for like actions in the area. For example, if conditional use permits were granted for other developments in the area where similar circumstances exist, the total of the conditional uses shall also remain consistent with the policies of RCW [90.58.020](#) and shall not produce substantial adverse effects to the shoreline environment.
- (3) Other uses which are not classified or set forth in the applicable master program may be authorized as conditional uses provided the applicant can demonstrate consistency with the requirements of this section and the requirements for conditional uses contained in the master program.
- (4) Uses which are specifically prohibited by the master program may not be authorized pursuant to either subsection (1) or (2) of this section.

[Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-160, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-170 Review criteria for variance permits.

The purpose of a variance permit is strictly limited to granting relief from specific bulk, dimensional or performance standards set forth in the applicable master program where there are extraordinary circumstances relating to the physical character or configuration of property such that the strict implementation of the master program will impose unnecessary hardships on the applicant or thwart the policies set forth in RCW [90.58.020](#).

- (1) Variance permits should be granted in circumstances where denial of the permit would result in a thwarting of the policy enumerated in RCW [90.58.020](#). In all instances the applicant must demonstrate that extraordinary circumstances shall be shown and the public interest shall suffer no substantial detrimental effect.
- (2) Variance permits for development and/or uses that will be located landward of the ordinary high water mark (OHWM), as defined in RCW [90.58.030](#) (2)(c), and/or landward of any wetland as defined in RCW [90.58.030](#) (2)(h), may be authorized provided the applicant can demonstrate all of the following:
 - (a) That the strict application of the bulk, dimensional or performance standards set forth in the applicable master program precludes, or significantly interferes with, reasonable use of the property;
 - (b) That the hardship described in (a) of this subsection is specifically related to the property, and is the result of unique conditions such as irregular lot shape, size, or natural features and the application of the master program, and not, for example, from deed restrictions or the applicant's own actions;
 - (c) That the design of the project is compatible with other authorized uses within the area and with uses planned for the area under the comprehensive plan and shoreline master program and will not cause adverse impacts to the shoreline environment;
 - (d) That the variance will not constitute a grant of special privilege not enjoyed by the other properties in the area;
 - (e) That the variance requested is the minimum necessary to afford relief; and
 - (f) That the public interest will suffer no substantial detrimental effect.

(3) Variance permits for development and/or uses that will be located waterward of the ordinary high water mark (OHWM), as defined in RCW [90.58.030](#) (2)(c), or within any wetland as defined in RCW [90.58.030](#) (2)(h), may be authorized provided the applicant can demonstrate all of the following:

(a) That the strict application of the bulk, dimensional or performance standards set forth in the applicable master program precludes all reasonable use of the property;

(b) That the proposal is consistent with the criteria established under subsection (2)(b) through (f) of this section; and

(c) That the public rights of navigation and use of the shorelines will not be adversely affected.

(4) In the granting of all variance permits, consideration shall be given to the cumulative impact of additional requests for like actions in the area. For example if variances were granted to other developments and/or uses in the area where similar circumstances exist the total of the variances shall also remain consistent with the policies of RCW [90.58.020](#) and shall not cause substantial adverse effects to the shoreline environment.

(5) Variances from the use regulations of the master program are prohibited.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter [90.58](#) RCW. WSR 17-17-016 (Order 15-06), § 173-27-170, filed 8/7/17, effective 9/7/17. Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-170, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-180 Application requirements for substantial development, conditional use, or variance permit.

A complete application for a substantial development, conditional use, or variance permit shall contain, as a minimum, the following information:

(1) The name, address and phone number of the applicant. The applicant should be the owner of the property or the primary proponent of the project and not the representative of the owner or primary proponent.

(2) The name, address and phone number of the applicant's representative if other than the applicant.

(3) The name, address and phone number of the property owner, if other than the applicant.

(4) Location of the property. This shall, at a minimum, include the property address and identification of the section, township and range to the nearest quarter, quarter section or latitude and longitude to the nearest minute. All applications for projects located in open water areas away from land shall provide a longitude and latitude location.

(5) Identification of the name of the shoreline (water body) that the site of the proposal is associated with. This should be the water body from which jurisdiction of the act over the project is derived.

(6) A general description of the proposed project that includes the proposed use or uses and the activities necessary to accomplish the project.

(7) A general description of the property as it now exists including its physical characteristics and improvements and structures.

(8) A general description of the vicinity of the proposed project including identification of the adjacent uses, structures and improvements, intensity of development and physical characteristics.

(9) A site development plan consisting of maps and elevation drawings, drawn to an appropriate scale to depict clearly all required information, photographs and text which shall include:

(a) The boundary of the parcel(s) of land upon which the development is proposed.

(b) The ordinary high water mark of all water bodies located adjacent to or within the boundary of the project. This may be an approximate location provided, that for any development where a determination of consistency with the applicable regulations requires a precise location of the ordinary high water mark the mark shall be located precisely and the biological and hydrological basis for the location as indicated on the plans shall be included in the development plan. Where the ordinary high water mark is neither adjacent to or within the boundary of the project, the plan shall indicate the distance and direction to the nearest ordinary high water mark of a shoreline.

(c) Existing and proposed land contours. The contours shall be at intervals sufficient to accurately determine the existing character of the property and the extent of proposed change to the land that is necessary for the development. Areas within the boundary that will not be altered by the development may be indicated as such and contours approximated for that area.

(d) A delineation of all wetland areas that will be altered or used as a part of the development.

- (e) A general indication of the character of vegetation found on the site.
- (f) The dimensions and locations of all existing and proposed structures and improvements including but not limited to; buildings, paved or graveled areas, roads, utilities, septic tanks and drainfields, material stockpiles or surcharge, and stormwater management facilities.
- (g) Where applicable, a landscaping plan for the project.
- (h) Where applicable, plans for development of areas on or off the site as mitigation for impacts associated with the proposed project shall be included and contain information consistent with the requirements of this section.
- (i) Quantity, source and composition of any fill material that is placed on the site whether temporary or permanent.
- (j) Quantity, composition and destination of any excavated or dredged material.
- (k) A vicinity map showing the relationship of the property and proposed development or use to roads, utilities, existing developments and uses on adjacent properties.
- (l) Where applicable, a depiction of the impacts to views from existing residential uses and public areas.
- (m) On all variance applications the plans shall clearly indicate where development could occur without approval of a variance, the physical features and circumstances on the property that provide a basis for the request, and the location of adjacent structures and uses.

[Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-180, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-190 Permits for substantial development, conditional use, or variance.

- (1) Each permit for a substantial development, conditional use or variance, issued by local government shall contain a provision that construction pursuant to the permit shall not begin and is not authorized until twenty-one days from the date of filing as defined in RCW [90.58.140](#)(6) and WAC [173-27-130](#), or until all review proceedings initiated within twenty-one days from the date of such filing have been terminated; except as provided in RCW [90.58.140](#) (5)(a) and (b).
- (2) Permits for substantial development, conditional use, or variance may be in any form prescribed and used by local government including a combined permit application form. Such forms will be supplied by local government.
- (3) A permit data sheet shall be submitted to the department with each shoreline permit. The permit data sheet form shall be as provided in Appendix A of this regulation.

[Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-190, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-200 Department review of conditional use and variance permits.

- (1) After local government approval of a conditional use or variance permit, local government shall submit the permit to the department for the department's approval, approval with conditions, or denial. The department shall render and transmit to local government and the applicant its final decision approving, approving with conditions, or disapproving the permit within thirty days of the date of submittal by local government pursuant to WAC [173-27-110](#).
- (2) The department shall review the complete file submitted by local government on conditional use and variance permits and any other information submitted or available that is relevant to the application. The department shall base its determination to approve, approve with conditions or deny a conditional use permit or variance on consistency with the policy and provisions of the act and, except as provided in WAC [173-27-210](#), the criteria in WAC [173-27-160](#) and [173-27-170](#).
- (3) Local government shall provide timely notification of the department's final decision to those interested persons having requested notification from local government pursuant to WAC [173-27-130](#).

[Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-200, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-210 Minimum standards for conditional use and variance permits.

Pursuant to RCW [90.58.100](#)(5) and [90.58.140](#)(3), the criteria contained in WAC [173-27-160](#) and [173-27-170](#) for shoreline conditional use and variance permits shall constitute the minimum criteria for review of these permits by local government and the department. Local government and the department may, in addition, apply the more restrictive criteria where they exist in approved and adopted master programs.

[Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-210, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-215 Shoreline restoration projects—Relief from shoreline master program development standards and use regulations.

(1) Purpose of section. In adopting RCW [90.58.580](#), the legislature found that restoration of degraded shoreline conditions is important to the ecological function of our waters. However, restoration projects that shift the location of the shoreline can inadvertently create hardships for property owners, particularly in urban areas. Hardship may occur when a shoreline restoration project shifts Shoreline Management Act regulations into areas that had not previously been regulated under the act or shifts the location of required shoreline buffers. The intent of this section is to provide relief to property owners in such cases, while protecting the viability of shoreline restoration projects.

(2) Conditions and criteria for providing relief. The local government may grant relief from shoreline master program development standards and use regulations within urban growth areas when the following apply:

(a) A shoreline restoration project causes or would cause a landward shift in the ordinary high water mark, resulting in the following:

(i) Land that had not been regulated under this chapter prior to construction of the restoration project is brought under shoreline jurisdiction; or

(ii) Additional regulatory requirements apply due to a landward shift in required shoreline buffers or other regulations of the applicable shoreline master program; and

(iii) Application of shoreline master program regulations would preclude or interfere with use of the property permitted by local development regulations, thus presenting a hardship to the project proponent;

(b) The proposed relief meets the following criteria:

(i) The proposed relief is the minimum necessary to relieve the hardship;

(ii) After granting the proposed relief, there is net environmental benefit from the restoration project;

(iii) Granting the proposed relief is consistent with the objectives of the shoreline restoration project and consistent with the shoreline master program; and

(iv) Where a shoreline restoration project is created as mitigation to obtain a development permit, the project proponent required to perform the mitigation is not eligible for relief under this section; and

(c) The application for relief must be submitted to the department for written approval or disapproval.

This review must occur during the department's normal review of a shoreline substantial development permit, conditional use permit, or variance. If no such permit is required, then the department shall conduct its review when the local government provides a copy of a complete application and all supporting information necessary to conduct the review.

(i) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (3) of this section, the department shall provide at least twenty days notice to parties that have indicated interest to the department in reviewing applications for relief under this section, and post the notice on its web site.

(ii) The department shall act within thirty calendar days of the close of the public notice period, or within thirty days of receipt of the proposal from the local government if additional public notice is not required.

(3) The public notice requirements of subsection (2)(c) of this section do not apply if the relevant shoreline restoration project was included in a shoreline master program or shoreline restoration plan as defined in WAC [173-26-201](#), as follows:

(a) The restoration plan has been approved by the department under applicable shoreline master program guidelines;

(b) The shoreline restoration project is specifically identified in the shoreline master program or restoration plan or is located along a shoreline reach identified in the shoreline master program or restoration plan as appropriate for granting relief from shoreline regulations; and

(c) The shoreline master program or restoration plan includes policies addressing the nature of the relief and why, when, and how it would be applied.

(4) A substantial development permit is not required on land within urban growth areas as defined in RCW [36.70A.030](#) that is brought under shoreline jurisdiction due to a shoreline restoration project creating a landward shift in the ordinary high water mark.

(5) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(6) "Shoreline restoration project" means a project designed to restore impaired ecological function of a shoreline.

[Statutory Authority: Chapter [90.58](#) RCW. WSR 17-17-016 (Order 15-06), § 173-27-215, filed 8/7/17, effective 9/7/17.]

WAC 173-27-220 Requests for review.

All requests for review of any final permit decisions under chapter [90.58](#) RCW and chapter [173-27](#) WAC are governed by the procedures established in RCW [90.58.180](#) and chapter [461-08](#) WAC, the rules of practice and procedure of the shorelines hearings board.

[Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-220, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

PART II

SHORELINE MANAGEMENT ACT ENFORCEMENT

WAC 173-27-240 Authority and purpose.

This part is adopted under RCW [90.58.200](#) and [90.58.210](#) to implement the enforcement responsibilities of the department and local government under the Shoreline Management Act. The act calls for a cooperative program between local government and the state. It provides for a variety of means of enforcement, including civil and criminal penalties, orders to cease and desist, orders to take corrective action, and permit rescission. The following should be used in addition to other mechanisms already in place at the local level and does not preclude other means of enforcement.

[Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-240, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-250 Definitions.

The definitions contained in WAC [173-27-030](#) shall apply in this part also except that the following shall apply when used in this part of the regulations:

(1) "Permit" means any form of permission required under the act prior to undertaking activity on shorelines of the state, including substantial development permits, variances, conditional use permits, permits for oil or natural gas exploration activities, permission which may be required for selective commercial timber harvesting, and shoreline exemptions; and

(2) "Exemption" means authorization from local government which establishes that an activity is exempt from substantial development permit requirements under WAC [173-27-040](#), but subject to regulations of the act and the local master program.

[Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-250, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-260 Policy.

These regulations should be used by local government in carrying out enforcement responsibilities under the act, unless local government adopts separate rules to implement the act's enforcement provision.

Enforcement action by the department or local government may be taken whenever a person has violated any provision of the act or any master program or other regulation promulgated under the act. The choice of enforcement action and the severity of any penalty should be based on the nature of the violation, the damage or risk to the public or to public resources, and/or the existence or degree of bad faith of the persons subject to the enforcement action.

[Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-260, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-270 Order to cease and desist.

Local government and/or the department shall have the authority to serve upon a person a cease and desist order if an activity being undertaken on shorelines of the state is in violation of chapter [90.58](#) RCW or the local master program.

(1) Content of order. The order shall set forth and contain:

(a) A description of the specific nature, extent, and time of violation and the damage or potential damage; and

(b) A notice that the violation or the potential violation cease and desist or, in appropriate cases, the specific corrective action to be taken within a given time. A civil penalty under WAC [173-27-280](#) may be issued with the order.

(2) Effective date. The cease and desist order issued under this section shall become effective immediately upon receipt by the person to whom the order is directed.

(3) Compliance. Failure to comply with the terms of a cease and desist order can result in enforcement actions including, but not limited to, the issuance of a civil penalty.

[Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-270, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-280 Civil penalty.

(1) A person who fails to conform to the terms of a substantial development permit, conditional use permit or variance issued under RCW [90.58.140](#), who undertakes a development or use on shorelines of the state without first obtaining a permit, or who fails to comply with a cease and desist order issued under these regulations may be subject to a civil penalty by local government. The department may impose a penalty jointly with local government, or alone only upon an additional finding that a person:

(a) Has previously been subject to an enforcement action for the same or similar type of violation of the same statute or rule; or

(b) Has been given previous notice of the same or similar type of violation of the same statute or rule; or

(c) The violation has a probability of placing a person in danger of death or bodily harm; or

(d) Has a probability of causing more than minor environmental harm; or

(e) Has a probability of causing physical damage to the property of another in an amount exceeding one thousand dollars.

(2) In the alternative, a penalty may be issued to a person by the department alone, or jointly with local government for violations which do not meet the criteria of subsection (1)(a) through (e) of this section, after the following information has been provided in writing to a person through a technical assistance visit or a notice of correction:

(a) A description of the condition that is not in compliance and a specific citation to the applicable law or rule;

(b) A statement of what is required to achieve compliance;

(c) The date by which the agency requires compliance to be achieved;

(d) Notice of the means to contact any technical assistance services provided by the agency or others; and

(e) Notice of when, where, and to whom a request to extend the time to achieve compliance for good cause may be filed with the agency.

Furthermore, no penalty shall be issued by the department until the individual or business has been given a reasonable time to correct the violation and has not done so.

(3) Amount of penalty. The penalty shall not exceed one thousand dollars for each violation. Each day of violation shall constitute a separate violation.

(4) Aiding or abetting. Any person who, through an act of commission or omission procures, aids or abets in the violation shall be considered to have committed a violation for the purposes of the civil penalty.

(5) Notice of penalty. A civil penalty shall be imposed by a notice in writing, either by certified mail with return receipt requested or by personal service, to the person incurring the same from the department and/or the local government, or from both jointly. The notice shall describe the violation, approximate the date(s) of violation, and shall order the acts constituting the violation to cease and desist, or, in appropriate cases, require necessary corrective action within a specific time.

[Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.120](#), [90.58.200](#), [90.58.060](#) and [43.21A.681](#). WSR 11-05-064 (Order 10-07), § 173-27-280, filed 2/11/11, effective 3/14/11. Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-280, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-290 Appeal of civil penalty.

(1) Right of appeal. Persons incurring a penalty imposed by the department or imposed jointly by the department and local government may appeal the same to the shorelines hearings board. Appeals to the shorelines hearings board are adjudicatory proceedings subject to the provisions of chapter [34.05](#) RCW. Persons incurring a penalty imposed by local government may appeal the same to the local government legislative authority.

(2) Timing of appeal. Appeals shall be filed within thirty days of the date of receipt of the penalty. The term "date of receipt" has the same meaning as provided in RCW [43.21B.001](#).

(3) Penalties due.

(a) Penalties imposed under this section shall become due and payable thirty days after receipt of notice imposing the same unless application for remission or mitigation is made or an appeal is filed. Whenever an application for remission or mitigation is made, penalties shall become due and payable thirty days after receipt of local government's and/or the department's decision regarding the remission or mitigation. Whenever an appeal of a penalty is filed, the penalty shall become due and payable upon completion of all review proceedings and upon the issuance of a final decision confirming the penalty in whole or in part.

(b) If the amount of a penalty owed the department is not paid within thirty days after it becomes due and payable, the attorney general, upon request of the department, shall bring an action in the name of the state of Washington to recover such penalty. If the amount of a penalty owed local government is not paid within thirty days after it becomes due and payable, local government may take actions necessary to recover such penalty.

(4) Penalty recovered. Penalties recovered by the department shall be paid to the state treasurer. Penalties recovered by local government shall be paid to the local government treasury. Penalties recovered jointly by the department and local government shall be divided equally between the department and the local government unless otherwise stipulated in the order.

[Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.120](#), [90.58.200](#), [90.58.060](#) and [43.21A.681](#). WSR 11-05-064 (Order 10-07), § 173-27-290, filed 2/11/11, effective 3/14/11. Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-290, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-300 Criminal penalty.

The procedures for criminal penalties shall be governed by RCW [90.58.220](#).

[Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-300, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]

WAC 173-27-310 Oil or natural gas exploration—Penalty.

Persons violating the provisions of RCW [90.58.550](#) or chapter [173-15](#) WAC shall be subject to a civil penalty issued by the department in an amount of up to five thousand dollars a day. The procedures for oil or natural gas exploration penalties shall be governed by RCW [90.58.560](#).

[Statutory Authority: RCW [90.58.140](#)(3) and [90.58].200. WSR 96-20-075 (Order 95-17), § 173-27-310, filed 9/30/96, effective 10/31/96.]