BLACK LAKE BASIN

COMMUNITY WATERSHED WORKSHOP

Thurston County Long-Range Planning & TRPC
October 30, 2014
Tonight’s Agenda

- Welcome

- Presentation: Guiding Growth – Healthy Watersheds Project
  - Background
  - Alternative Land Use Scenarios
  - Next Steps

- Table Discussions
Guiding Growth – Healthy Watersheds

Project Background

- Thurston County is one of the fastest growing in Western Washington – How do we best protect water resources as our region grows?

- 2009: Thurston County and TRPC received a grant from EPA to conduct watershed-based planning.
Assessed current conditions for 69 basins

April 2013: Selected 3 basins for focus
- McLane Creek (October 9 workshop)
- Black Lake
- Woodard Creek (October 22 workshop)

2013/2014: Gathered information and conducted analyses on each basin

Now: Developing recommendations for future management
Where is the Black Lake Basin?

- ~ 5,000 acres (additional area occasionally drains to Black Lake)

- Jurisdiction
  - Rural Thurston County
  - Tumwater City and UGA

- Low density residential land use, open space and parks
What is the current condition of Black Lake Basin?

**Water Quality Ranking:** *Fair*
- Elevated nutrient levels; blue-green algae blooms in lake
- Fish Pond Creek fails fecal coliform standard

**Habitat & Species**
- Oregon Spotted Frog

**44% Tree Canopy**

**8% Total Impervious Surfaces**
What are the water resource concerns in Black Lake Basin?

- Population growth & development
- Water quality and algal blooms
- Nuisance aquatic species
- Shoreline vegetation & tree cover
Public Opinion Survey: Black Lake

- Summer 2013: Public survey sent by mail
- April 2014: Public meeting
- High level of concern about water quality

**Important:**
- Clean drinking water
- Puget Sound WQ
- Swimmable lakes and streams
- Private property rights
- Healthy salmon runs

**How concerned are you about water quality in Black Lake Basin?**

- Very concerned: 42%
- Concerned: 27%
- Neutral: 18%
- Not very concerned: 7%
- Not at all concerned: 6%
Public Outreach

- Key Themes and Values
  - Balancing urban growth while preserving less dense, rural lifestyle
  - Protecting habitat for wildlife
  - Improved water quality in lake
  - Improved access to lake

- How would you hope to describe the Black Lake basin in thirty years?
  - Much the same character as today, but improved water quality
Black Lake Basin: Draft Goals

- Maintain basin-wide ecological functions
- Protect (and improve) water quality
- Protect habitat for fish and wildlife
- Restore stream and shoreline functions where degraded
- Increase recreational opportunities
Alternative Land Use Scenarios

1. **Historic Conditions**
   - Forested, with some prairie and wetlands

2. **Current Conditions**
   - Current development, impervious surfaces, and stormwater

3. **Planned Future Trend**
   - Current regulations carried out into the future

4. **Alternative Futures**
   - Changes to land use and development regulations
   - Restoration of riparian areas and wetlands
   - Stormwater retrofits for older development
Alternative Land Use Scenarios

- Historic → Current
  - More than 15% Forest cover lost
  - Some loss of wetland areas
  - Changes from historic to current conditions greater than from future growth
Planned Trend Scenario

Black Lake Basin

Planned Trend Scenario

VISION Black Lake Basin develops fully under current zoning, development, and stormwater regulations

- As development occurs, some open and forested areas are removed by a mixture of hard surfaces (roads, trails, driveways, parking lots, and other cleared areas) (i.e., reduction in forested areas from 80% to 60%).
- Total impervious areas in the basin increase to 11% (from 9% currently).
- Forest cover is 52% of the basin, down from 57% historically.

Population increases from 9,200 residents today to almost 12,200

Summary of Model Results

Land Use

- More forest and agricultural areas are converted to residential use.
- The number of homes in the basin increases from approximately 2,500 to 4,500 (or 70%) (increase. This is the greatest increase among all the future scenarios.
- New development occurs in a more diffuse and low density manner subject to the jurisdiction's existing regulations.
- No additional conservation requirements ens agricultural lands.
Planned Trend Scenario: Outcomes

- **Land Use**
  - More forest and agricultural areas are converted to residential
    - ~4,000 additional dwelling units
    - Total impervious area increases to 10%
    - Fewer septics in higher risk areas as sewer lines are extended to urban areas

- **Environmental Outcomes**
  - Bacteria levels in streams remain elevated and get worse in some areas
  - Nutrient levels improve, as more homes are connected to sewer
  - Habitat is fragmented by development
Future Alternative A

Black Lake Basin

Vision
Black Lake Basin concentrates low-impact development, while maintaining sensitive open spaces in rural areas.

Future Alternative Scenario A

Land Use
- Fewer forested and agricultural areas are converted to residential use.
- The number of homes in the basin increases from approximately 2,500 to 5,000. This is a reduction of fewer homes than predicted under the residential scenario.

Legend
- More homes are on the north shore of the lake.
- Impervious Surfaces & Forest
  - Less forested area is converted to cleared or hard surfaces.
  - Forest cover remains approximately the same as today.
  - In some areas, the forest increases to fill vacant lots and yards but slightly less than today.

Future Alternative A

Efforts to ensure habitat and lower conditions for wildlife.
Future Alternative A: Outcomes

- **Land Use**
  - Fewer forest and agricultural areas are converted to residential
    - ~340 fewer new dwelling units than Planned Trend
    - Larger, undeveloped parcels zoned at lower density
    - More protective policies along shorelines
    - Impervious area slightly lower than Planned Trend

- **Environmental Outcomes**
  - Stream temperatures and nutrients remain mostly the same as current conditions
  - Bacteria and nutrient levels reduced in some areas
  - Habitat connectivity better preserved
Future Alternative B

Black Lake Basin
Future Alternative Scenario B

VISION
Black Lake Basin is a model for restoration through incentives, education, and investment in stormwater infrastructure.
Future Alternative B: Outcomes

- **Land Use**
  - Undeveloped parcels preserved through incentive programs, purchase of development rights
  - Vegetation along shorelines restored
  - Some wetland areas restored
  - Education and outreach on pollution-reducing practices increased
  - Total impervious area increases, but less than Planned Trend or Alternative A

- **Environmental Outcomes**
  - Stream temperatures reduced significantly
  - Bacteria and nutrient levels improved
  - Benefits for a variety of aquatic species
Guiding Growth – Healthy Watersheds
Next Steps

- Preferred Recommendations
  *can include one of the future alternatives, mix and match from all three, or list new alternatives*

  - Public comment period
  - Planning Commission
  - Board of County Commissioners
Guiding Growth – Healthy Watersheds

Next Steps

- Tonight
  - Question & Answers
  - Break for Table Discussions
  - Dot voting
Guiding Growth – Healthy Watersheds

Table Discussion Questions

- What goals and strategies are the most important to include in a final list of recommendations?
- What features in the alternatives would you want to see included? Which would concern you?
- What could be added?
Questions? Comments?

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