KitsapCounty

PLANNING COMMISSION

Executive Summary

Issue Title: Department of Community Development: Rural Lands Analysis + Salmon Recovery in Local Planning

Meeting Date: November 17, 2026

Time Required: 30 Minutes

Attendees: Jason Robert Walsh, Senior Long-Range Planner, Susan O'Neil Senior Conservation Planner with Environmental Science Associates, Heather Cleveland, Senior Long-Range Planner

Action Requested at this Meeting: Information Only.

Background:
The purpose of the Rural Lands Analysis project is to evaluate existing rural land use patterns, policies, and regulatory frameworks in unincorporated Kitsap County and to provide a clear analytical foundation for future rural planning decisions. The second phase of the project will support recommendations on:

- informed policy development
- potential Comprehensive Plan updates
- assessment of rural pressure for increased density as realized during the Rural-to-Rural reclassification request assessments in the 2025 Year of the Rural project
- prioritization on lands for conservation and preservation
- research incentives to maintain agriculture and forestry working lands and general conservation
- identification of targeted code improvements

This historical effort is informed by prior rural planning initiatives, including the Year of the Rural, but is a distinct project focused on analysis, documentation, and implementation support rather than a comprehensive plan update on its own.

The Salmon Recovery in Local Planning Project within the Rural Lands Analysis will identify strategies within local salmon recovery plans that intersect with land use planning and policy implementation in Kitsap County. By linking the goals of salmon recovery with the County's long-range planning framework, this effort will strengthen the alignment between ecological health, rural character, and community resilience.

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Next Steps:

- Rural Lands Analysis:
    - Technical Policy Advisory Committee
    - Agricultural Advisory Council – RLA Subcommittee
    - Forestry Working Group – 2027 guest speakers/field trips
    - Wildlife Corridor Working Group
    - Data and plans analysis and build GIS Hub
    - Salmon Recovery in Local Planning
        - Final Salmon Recovery Memo
        - Integrate memo into RLA report
- 2027 Quarterly Planning Commission Briefings

Attachments:

- Presentation

Reference:

- Rural and Resource Lands Chapter
- RLA & SRLP Project Charter