



## Clatsop County Community Development

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December 3, 2014

TO: Board of Commissioners, Planning Commission, Southwest Coastal Citizens Advisory Committee

FR: Heather Hansen, Community Development Director

RE: Work Session on Potential Wetland Protection Options

There are various methods and levels of protection that comply with Statewide Planning Goals, but the main question is....what does the County want? This should be the focus of the work session. State and County staff can suggest ways to achieve what you want. The following is a general summary of the wetland protection issues and options.

**WETLAND DATA QUALITY:** One of the biggest challenges to protecting wetlands in Clatsop County is the lack of good quality wetland data. Regardless of which protection options the county chooses, they can only be applied to known wetlands. The following is a description of the types of wetland data we have available:

- National Wetland Inventory (NWI): Covers most but not all of the county; the quality is poor
- Local Wetland Inventory (LWI): These are more detailed than the NWI, but not as accurate as a wetland delineation (see below). The only LWI completed in Clatsop County was in the Arch Cape/Cove Beach area. The wetlands identified in that LWI cannot be regulated locally until the LWI is adopted by the County.
- Wetland delineations are the most accurate and site-specific. The county gives notice to DSL if development is proposed near a wetland identified on the NWI or LWI, and DSL often requires a delineation.
- State Wetland Inventory (SWI) is comprised of all of the above.

**LEVELS OF REGULATION:** Depending on which protection method is chosen, there are various levels of regulation that can be placed on wetlands, including but not limited to:

- Minimum county requirement is to give notice to DSL if development is proposed near an SWI wetland, and DSL would continue to regulate impacts to those wetlands;
- Allow limited types of development under limited circumstances to specified wetlands – could require use of Low Impact Development (LID) methods;
- Allow no development in specified wetlands;\*
- Adopt a buffer and allow no development in specified wetlands and no\* or limited development in their buffers (could use LIDs);

*\* other than through a hardship variance*

**SPECIFIC AREAS OF THE COUNTY:** Local wetland regulations can also be applied to specific geographic areas, or site-specific wetland functions, including but not limited to:

- Status quo – State is only regulator of wetlands outside of Coastal Shorelands Overlay and Lake & Wetland Zone
- Adopt existing Arch Cape/Cove Beach LWI so those wetlands can be regulated locally
- Identify limited areas of the county where additional LWIs would be done and adopted, such as all Rural Communities, unmapped areas adjacent to streams, etc
- Identify specific wetland functions and values to be protected that would assist in complying with other Statewide Planning Goals, such as water quality (Goal 6), flood control (Goal 7), etc