



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

*Northwest Regional Office 3190 160th SE Bellevue, Washington 98008-5452 (425) 649-7000*

October 28, 2011

Ms. Betsy Stevenson  
Senior Planner  
Skagit County Planning and Development Services  
1800 Continental Place  
Mt. Vernon, WA 98273

Dear Ms. Stevenson:

**RE: Proposed Skagit County Critical Areas Ordinance Amendment and Enrollment in Voluntary Stewardship Program**

Thank you for giving the Department of Ecology (Ecology) the opportunity to comment on the proposed Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO) amendments for Ongoing Agriculture and Skagit County (County) enrollment in the Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP) established by Engrossed Substitute House Bill 1886 (2011). We understand that while the proposed CAO amendments reference VSP enrollment, they are primarily being proposed as a separate, ongoing update of the County's CAO.

Ecology supports the VSP enrollment for the entirety of unincorporated Skagit County and nomination of the Samish and Skagit watersheds as priority watersheds. We look forward to a continuing dialogue with the County in developing the VSP work plans.

We appreciate the County's efforts to better protect critical areas and ongoing agriculture in Skagit County. Thank you for providing us the opportunity to work with you in the update process. If you have any questions, please give me a call at (425) 649-7148 or send email to [paan461@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:paan461@ecy.wa.gov).

Sincerely,

Paul S. Anderson, PWS  
Wetland Specialist  
Shorelands and Environmental Assistance Program

PSA: ca

Ms. Betsy Stevenson  
RE: Proposed CAO Amendment and VSP  
October 28, 2011  
Page 2

cc: Geoff Tallent, Erik Stockdale and Donna Bunten, Ecology  
Ron Shultz, State Conservation Commission  
Dave Anderson and Ike Nwankwo, Department of Commerce