

Lee McEnery

From: Anderson, Paul S. (ECY) <paan461@ECY.WA.GOV>
Sent: Monday, May 13, 2013 2:56 PM
To: Lee McEnery
Cc: Stockdale, Erik (ECY); Fritzen, Bob (ECY); Arber, Laura (DFW); Powell, Susan M NWS; brogj@foster.com
Subject: Ecology SEPA comments for the record on Runstad bulkhead PSJ000-12-0009
Attachments: Runstad Bulkhead SEPA Letter 5-13-13.pdf

Lee:

Attached, please find Ecology's comments for the record on the after-the-fact permitting for the Runstad bulkhead. Ecology has serious concerns with this proposal. One critical element for permitting is accurately locating the OHWM. The current submittal does not adequately address the OHWM location and we believe additional information is needed as part of the permitting review. The OHWM needs to be field verified by Ecology before the appropriate mitigation and permitting can be finalized.

Please let me know if you have any questions or would like any additional information.

Paul

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May 13, 2013

Lee McEnery, Planner
San Juan County Community Development and Planning
P.O. Box 947
Friday Harbor, WA 98250

Dear Ms. McEnery:

RE: SEPA Comments on the Proposed Runstad Bulkhead, PSJ000-12-0009

Thank you for providing the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) with a request for review and supporting SEPA information for the after-the-fact permitting of a 413-foot long rock bulkhead on the Runstad property. Supporting information included an Environmental Checklist, topographic survey (San Juan Surveying, Inc, November 28, 2012), project narrative, and a recommendation for shoreline stabilization (Coast & Harbor Engineering, November 26, 2012). I am the Ecology Wetland Specialist responsible for San Juan County (County) and wish to have the following comments entered for the record.

The project site includes two parcels located on the Thatcher Pass shoreline, Blakely Island. The west lot includes a single-family residence and the east lot is lawn and trees without any structures (TPNs 151024002 and 151024003, respectively). The project submittal indicates that improperly controlled stormwater led to bank failure in 2010 and two consulting firms have concluded that a rock bulkhead is the appropriate stabilization. Shoreline plantings and beach nourishment is also proposed as part of the after-the-fact permitting.

The information in the SEPA submittal does not adequately discuss how the OHWM on this site was determined. A note on the topographic survey states that the newly constructed bulkhead obscured OHWM indicators and therefore the mean higher high water (MHHW) was used as the OHWM surrogate. Use of the MHHW for OHWM is only allowed in those rare cases where OHWM indicators cannot be located, which does not appear to be applicable for this site. The OHWM is always located landward of the MHHW, typically about 1.5 feet higher in elevation.

Based on the elevations shown on the topographic survey (MHHW = 7.33' NAVD; bulkhead toe = 8.2' NAVD), the bulkhead has been installed at and below the OHWM. Therefore, authorization from Ecology is required for the bulkhead installation, in addition

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to approval by San Juan County and other state and federal agencies. Ecology will be contacting the applicant notifying them of the need for an application.

A more detailed description of the methods and field indicators used to determine the OHWM needs to be provided and the OHWM boundary should be field-verified by Ecology prior to approving this project. The project description and drawings should be revised based on the verified OHWM.

Before the County makes a decision on the current application, additional analyses should be provided as to:

1. a detailed description of the methods and field indicators used to determine the OHWM for Shoreline Management Act (RCW 90.58) and Water Pollution Control Act (RCW 90.48) compliance;
2. a more detailed analysis of the rate of erosion and what structures or infrastructure are imminently threatened by bank failure; and
3. a more detailed analysis of potential soft armoring options and alternatives with less overall environmental impact for both lots, while avoiding work below the OHWM.

We believe that the current application is incomplete and additional information is needed for a permitting decision on this proposal. We would be happy to assist the County however we can in review of this project.

If you have any questions about these comments, please give me a call at (425) 649-7148 or send an e-mail to paan461@ecy.wa.gov.

Sincerely,



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

PSA: ca

Enclosures

E-cc: Erik Stockdale and Bob Fritzen, Ecology Shorelands & Environmental Assistance Program
Laura Arber, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Susan Powell, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Joseph Brogan, Foster Pepper, LLC