

PUGET SOUND

National Estuary Program

DECISION SUPPORT TOOL FOR CRITICAL AREAS & LAND USE PLANNING (PROOF OF CONCEPT)

Local governments face significant challenges with planning for growth and development while also protecting critical areas. Finding solutions requires balancing many competing factors. Mapping and modeling tools are available to help with these assessments, but they are not well integrated. Planners are often unaware of tools and lack the capacity or expertise to put them together for decision making.

What we did

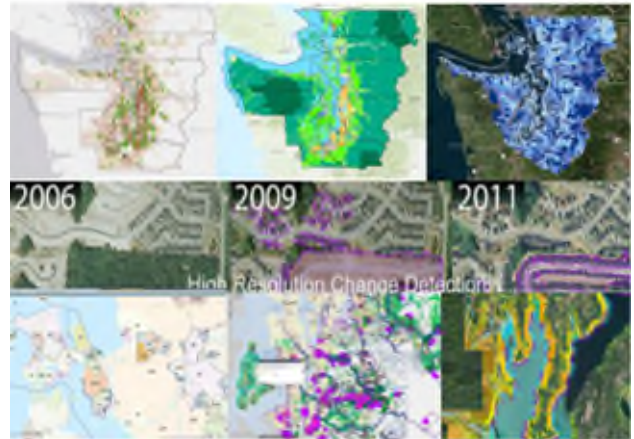
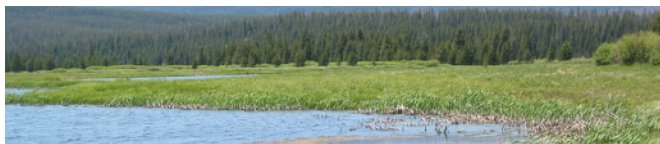
To help local communities with their planning efforts, Commerce developed a conceptual design for an integrated, web-based spatial decision support tool for critical areas and land use planning. The tool will:

- Bring together maps, models, data, and resources from multiple agencies and jurisdictions.
- Show the best areas for development, protection, and restoration actions based on multiple factors.
- Calculate the drawbacks and benefits of multiple zoning, regulatory, and restoration scenarios.

Planners will be able to use these features for real time scenario analysis of land use alternatives based on their priorities and resource agency recommendations.

How we did it

- Engaged users to understand needs and priorities.
- Researched similar tools and contractors.
- Addressed risks and barriers.
- Wrote a prospectus and plan for building the tool.



WHY IS THIS ISSUE IMPORTANT

The tool would make best available science more accessible; provide increased transparency, consistency, and accountability in decision making; improve efficiency in planning processes; help ensure that decisions are science-based; and facilitate planning at the watershed scale. This will ultimately result in better decisions that benefit Puget Sound recovery goals.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Work with Commerce to integrate your zoning, resource, and planning maps with our regional maps. Review our tool prospectus and share with us how you might use the tool in your processes. Let us know if you would like to be a partner during the development of the tool or would like to pilot or beta test the tool when it's available. We will continue to seek input throughout the tool development process. Let us know if you would like to get involved.

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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