



# Meeting Agenda

## City Council

City Hall  
601 4th Avenue E  
Olympia, WA 98501

Information: 360.753.8244

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**Tuesday, July 20, 2021**

**5:30 PM**

**Council Chambers**

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### Special Work Session

**1. ROLL CALL**

**2. OTHER BUSINESS**

- 2.A**     [21-0727](#)     Draft Phase 2 Environmental Impact Statement for the Future Capital Lake Preferred Alternative Briefing

**Attachments:**     [Project Website](#)

**3. ADJOURNMENT**

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## City Council

### Draft Phase 2 Environmental Impact Statement for the Future Capital Lake Preferred Alternative Briefing

**Agenda Date:** 7/20/2021  
**Agenda Item Number:** 2.A  
**File Number:**21-0727

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**Type:** study session   **Version:** 1   **Status:** Study Session

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#### **Title**

Draft Phase 2 Environmental Impact Statement for the Future Capital Lake Preferred Alternative Briefing

#### **Recommended Action**

##### **Committee Recommendation:**

Not referred to a committee.

##### **City Manager Recommendation:**

Briefing only; no action requested.

#### **Report**

##### **Issue:**

Whether to receive a briefing on the Draft Phase 2 Environmental Impact Statement for the Future Capital Lake Preferred Alternative.

##### **Staff Contact:**

Susan Grisham, Assistant to the City Manager, 360.753.8244

##### **Presenter(s):**

Ann Larson, Director of Government Relations, Department of Enterprise Services  
Carrie Martin, Project Manager, Department of Enterprise Services  
Tessa Gardner-Brown, Senior Environmental Planner, Floyd-Snider  
Ray Outlaw, Senior Engagement and Environmental Planner, Floyd-Snider

##### **Background and Analysis:**

In 2018, the Washington State Legislature directed DES to develop an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) for long-term management of Capitol Lake. Enterprise Services established the Capitol Lake/Deschutes Estuary Long Term Management Project to meet this mandate. The EIS will evaluate and identify a preferred environmentally and economically sustainable long-term management alternative for the Capitol Lake - Deschutes Estuary. An Executive Workgroup provides overall guidance to the project and includes representatives from the City of Olympia, City of Tumwater, LOTT Clean Water Alliance, Port of Olympia, Thurston County, Squaxin Island Tribe, and Enterprise Services.

The project has established several workgroups to provide expertise and advice on various aspects of the project. Mayor Selby represents the City on the Executive Work Group (EWG).

Department of Enterprise Services (DES) staff along with consultants from Floyd-Snider will present the Draft EIS, which describes how the Managed Lake, Estuary, and Hybrid Alternatives would change the environment if they were selected for long-term management of the Capitol Lake - Deschutes Estuary. The Draft EIS also evaluates a No Action Alternative, as required by the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA).

The Draft EIS summarizes results of the technical analyses that were completed to support the environmental review of this project, and the engagement led by Enterprise Services to promote participation by tribes, governmental partners, resource agencies, and the community throughout this process.

**Attachments:**

Project Website

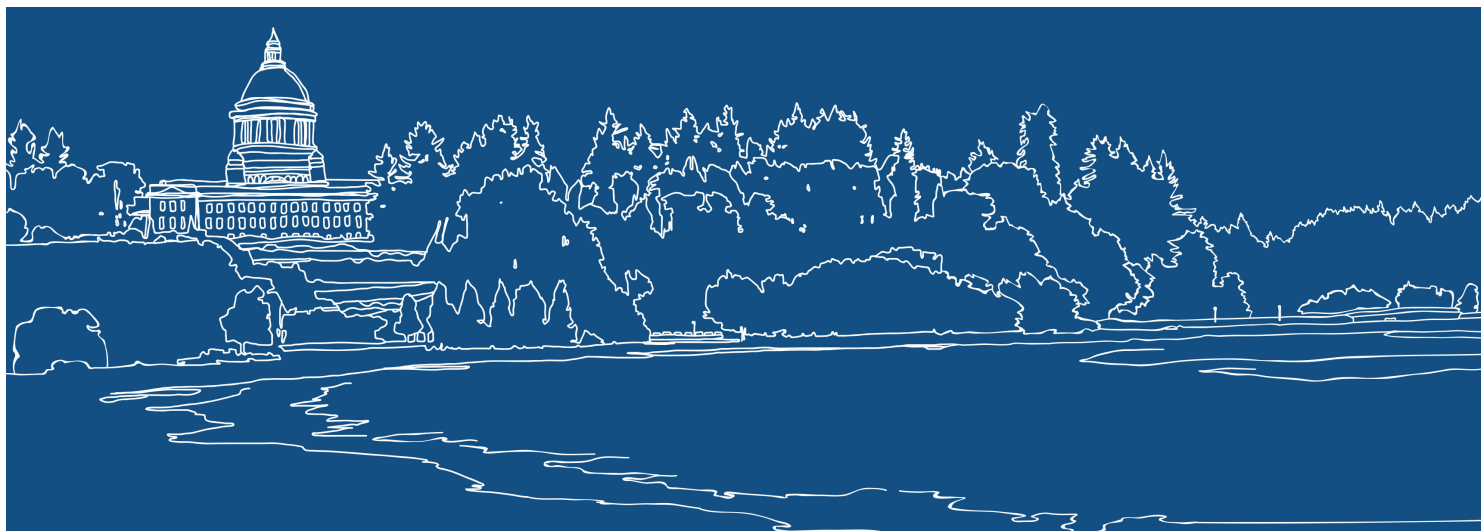
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# CAPITOL LAKE — DESCHUTES ESTUARY

Long-Term Management Project Environmental Impact Statement

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● Visit the Online Open House to learn more about the Draft EIS and submit your comments by Aug. 13, 2021. ●  
(<https://clde.participate.online>)

## PROJECT



The Washington State Department of Enterprise Services (Enterprise Services) is conducting an environmental review process under the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) for the Capitol Lake – Deschutes Estuary Long-Term Management Project.

## **WHAT IS THE CAPITOL LAKE – DESCHUTES ESTUARY?**

Historically, what is now known as Capitol Lake was part of the Deschutes Estuary, where freshwater from the Deschutes River would mix with saltwater from Budd Inlet over expansive tideflats. The Deschutes Estuary has long-standing cultural and spiritual significance to local tribes, particularly the Squaxin Island Tribe.

Between 1949 and 1951, a dam was constructed at 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and without the tidal exchange, the area was transformed into a freshwater lake, fed primarily by the Deschutes River. The waterbody was renamed Capitol Lake. Capitol Lake is the 260-acre waterbody located on the Washington State Capitol Campus, adjacent to downtown Olympia, at the base of Puget Sound. Capitol Lake was designed as part of the Washington State Capitol Campus, and it quickly became an important visual and recreational resource to the community.

## **WHAT PROBLEM IS THIS PROJECT SEEKING TO RESOLVE?**

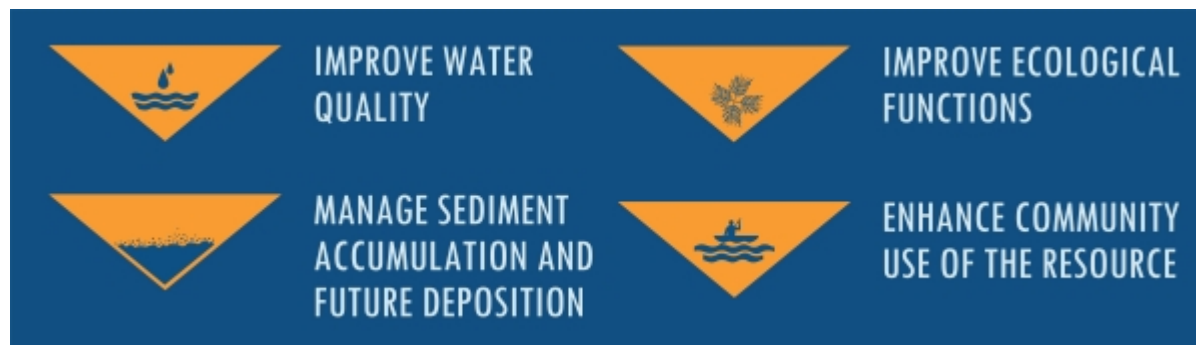
An estimated 35,000 cubic yards of sediment are transported by the Deschutes River (and Percival Creek) into the Capitol Lake Basin each year, shallowing the lake and resulting in conditions that are visibly altered. Since construction of the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Dam in 1951, sediment accumulation has reached up to 13 feet thick in some areas. Water quality monitoring began in the 1970s in response to excessive growth of aquatic plants, dense algal mats, and reduced water clarity, which are caused by high nutrient levels in Capitol Lake. In 1985, the swimming beach in Capitol Lake was formally closed because of high bacteria levels, following years of intermittent closures due to water quality conditions. Beginning in the late 1980s, management strategies were implemented to address aquatic invasive species. There are now 15 different plant and animal aquatic invasive species in Capitol Lake. In 2009, the presence of the invasive New Zealand mudsnail resulted in official closure to all public uses.

Many of these environmental conditions persist today and active use of the waterbody continues to be restricted. The long-term management project would address the diminished beneficial uses of the waterbody, caused by accumulating sediment, historically poor water quality, algal blooms, and invasive plant and animal species.

## **WHAT ARE THE PROJECT GOALS?**

In 2016, Enterprise Services, in coordination with the Squaxin Island Tribe, governmental and agency partners, and the community, identified four primary goals for long-term management of the Capitol Lake – Deschutes Estuary that should be satisfied by any long-term management alternative.

The goals were established during a collaborative process, referred to as Phase 1 of the Long-Term Management Project. There is broad agreement that a long-term management project must be implemented to achieve these goals and improve existing conditions in the Project Area.

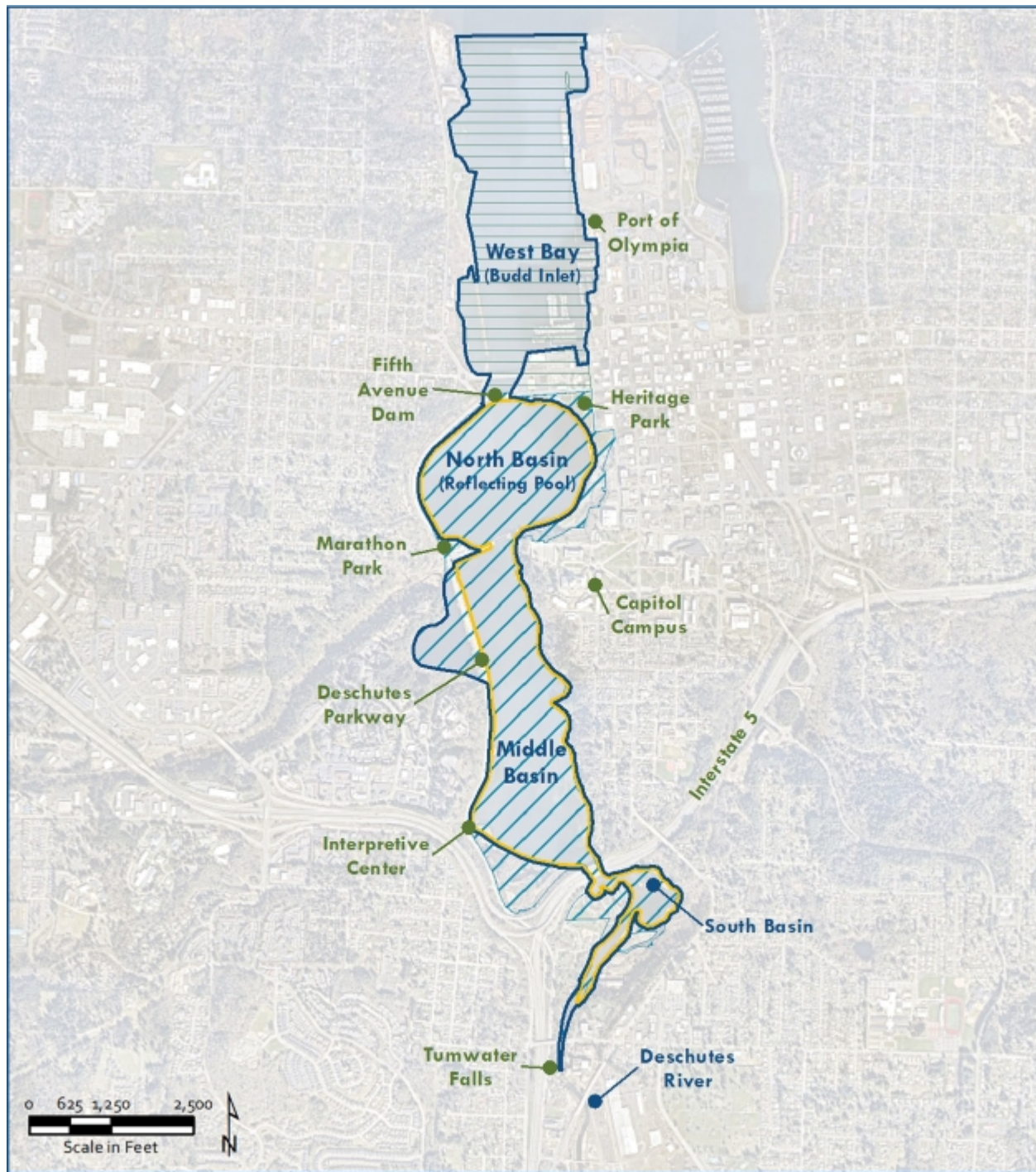


**The Capitol Lake – Deschutes Estuary Long-Term Management Project seeks to identify an environmentally and economically sustainable management alternative that will improve environmental conditions and enhance community use of the resource.**


## WHAT IS THE PROJECT AREA?

The Project Area includes the 260-acre Capitol Lake that is managed by Enterprise Services, and it extends to the northern point of West Bay of Budd Inlet. The parks and public space adjoining Capitol Lake and within the jurisdiction of Enterprise Services are also included in the Project Area.

The Project Area does not extend upstream of Tumwater Falls into the Deschutes River (south) because that area would not be directly affected by the Capitol Lake – Deschutes Estuary Long-Term Management Project.



### Legend

	Capitol Lake/ Capitol Lake Basin		Capitol Lake – Deschutes Estuary		Project Area (within Enterprise Services Jurisdiction)		Project Area (outside Enterprise Services Jurisdiction)
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[View the Draft EIS and related fact sheets. \(/library#DEIS\)](#)

## WHAT LONG-TERM MANAGEMENT ALTERNATIVES ARE EVALUATED IN THE DRAFT EIS?



There are two general approaches for management of the Capitol Lake – Deschutes Estuary: keep the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Dam in place and maintain a freshwater lake, or remove the 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Dam and reintroduce tidal estuarine conditions.

Three long-term management alternatives (also referred to as action alternatives) have emerged from these two approaches, and are evaluated in the Draft EIS:

- **A Managed Lake**, which would be similar to the existing Capitol Lake but with additional actions to meet lake management objectives. The 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Dam would be retained and overhauled to significantly extend the serviceable life of the structure.
- **An Estuary**, which would reintroduce tidal flow to conditions similar to the historic Deschutes Estuary. The 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Dam would be removed, and a 500-foot opening would be created to reconnect the Capitol Lake Basin with Budd Inlet.
- **A Hybrid**, which would reintroduce tidal flow to conditions similar to the historic Deschutes Estuary. The 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue Dam would be removed, and a 500-foot-wide opening would be created. A new barrier would be installed to create a smaller (approximately 45-acre) lake feature (or “reflecting pool”).

A No Action Alternative, which represents the most likely future expected in absence of implementing a long-term management project, is also evaluated. This is a required element of an EIS. It provides a baseline against which the benefits, impacts, and costs associated with the action alternatives can be compared.

**The No Action Alternative does not meet project goals.**

## WHAT WOULD THE ALTERNATIVES LOOK LIKE?

Visual simulations included in the Draft EIS illustrate how the project area would change for each action alternative at several locations.





Simulation of the Managed Lake Alternative

## ESTUARY ALTERNATIVE



Simulation of the Estuary Alternative at Mean Tide

## HYBRID ALTERNATIVE







## Simulation of the Hybrid Alternative at High Tide


### CONTACT US

For more information about the project, or the EIS process, please email

[info@CapitolLakeDeschutesEstuaryEIS.org](mailto:info@CapitolLakeDeschutesEstuaryEIS.org)

(<mailto:info@CapitolLakeDeschutesEstuaryEIS.org>) or (360) 407-9323 (tel:360-407-9323). All email and comments become public records and, if requested, will be disclosed as required by the [Public Records Act 42.56.RCW](https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=42.56.520). (<https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/default.aspx?cite=42.56.520>)



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