WETLAND FUNCTIONS-EXISTING AND PROPOSED

The existing wetlands function as part of larger systems and as such, have functions that are somewhat diminished in the area around Hood Canal Drive. Wetland B has slightly higher functions than Wetland A because it is part of a larger, less heavily developed system that originates at the beaver ponds south of Buck Lake but again, the area immediately along the road has slightly lower functional ability because of activities along the road. Both of these wetlands were rated for functions in the wetland analysis report prepared for this project and they are presented again in the mitigation report to document their current conditions so that the mitigation can be designed to replicate or enhance those functions. Both the existing functions of the impacted wetland and the proposed functions of the mitigation area are discussed in this section.

Pre Impact Functions of Existing Wetland A and B

Wetland A rates Low for flood and storm water storage and Moderate for water quality protection because it is mostly on slopes above a year round stream and therefore does not have the potential to improve water quality or store significant amounts of excess water. It rates Moderate-High for groundwater discharge also because it lies on slopes through which discharge of groundwater is occurring most of the year. It rates Low for groundwater recharge also because it lies on slopes and because it has a stream outlet, which reduces the duration that water remains in the system and therefore the ability of the wetland to recharge groundwater. It has moderate value for biological support because of its small size and proximity to the road and residential development. There is continuous forest along the stream flow that makes the wetland act as a short corridor between habitat areas that lie between this wetland and the shoreline of Hood Canal. The wetland currently rates Low-Moderate for recreational, educational and aesthetic functions because it is alongside the roadway and it is not on public property. There are also no features that would make the wetland valuable for recreational pursuits, which is the main reason for the Low rating.

Wetland B rates slightly higher for most functions because it is positioned upslope of Hood Canal Drive and is associated with a much larger system that has greater potential to perform the typical wetland functions. Its large size increases its ability to store excess water however, most of the system traverses undeveloped land so it does not receive a significant amount of excess water from developed areas. The absence of significant runoff flowing into the wetland from developed areas limits the opportunity of this wetland system to store excess water and improve water quality. The wetland rates moderate for both water quality and storage functions. Wetland B rates moderate to high for groundwater discharge because it appears to be fed primarily by seepage from the slopes so it is functioning as a significant discharge area particularly since it likely has similar conditions along the entire wetland system and it feeds a year round stream with resident cutthroat. It rates low for groundwater recharge functions because it is on sloping terrain and there is a stream outlet, which reduces the length of time water remains in the wetland