



# #24—BULKHEAD ALTERNATIVES

## Go Natural

- If the nearshore area is left natural, you'll have a healthy beach.
- Your access to the water is easier if the beach is not bulkheaded.
- Resist the temptation to clear everything off your site.
- Use groundwater and vegetation management to help maintain soil, serve as water drains, create erosion prevention barriers, and absorb excess water from soils.
- Plant fast-growing, erosion-resistant plants to help stabilize eroding areas, while maintaining important habitat.
- Replenish the beach with gravel and sand to help reduce wave action.
- Drift logs provide habitat and help reduce erosion.
- Scientists have found that bulkheads and other hard shoreline structures destroy or degrade fish and wildlife habitat.



- Join a neighborhood group or volunteer with a stewardship group where you can learn more about the shoreline.
- Visit the Washington State Department of Ecology website [www.ecy.wa.gov/](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/) (click Environmental Info, then click Search and type in Bulkheads).

## Bulkheads Don't Stop Slides

Bulkheads do little to prevent sliding of the upper bank. They simply can't withstand the sheer force of a saturated, sliding hillside.

## Increased Erosion

Bulkheads don't prevent the beach from eroding. In fact, when waves hit a bulkhead, they scour out the beach's natural sand, gravel, and rock. This sets up a chain reaction that can affect nearby beaches.



## Build Smart

- Site your home as far back from the water as possible to prevent erosion concerns and expenses for bulkheads, seawalls, and other shoreline armoring.
- Move or replace threatened structures such as stairways or decks.

## Effective Alternatives

There are several proven ways to protect your property and prevent beach erosion. Ask questions and check with Kitsap County Department of Community Development.

## Learn About Your Land

- Check county maps for information about your shoreline, especially about the potential for flooding, erosion, slope stability and nearshore habitat.
- Consider hiring a geologist to provide a site-specific assessment of site stability and erosion potential.

