William Balcom

I''m also concerned about the cost and uncertainty this would create. Cities and counties will have to update regulations, conduct new studies, and take on additional administrative work, and those costs won''t magically disappear. They''ll show up in permit fees, project costs, and ultimately the price people pay for housing. At a time when affordability is already a challenge, that''s the wrong direction.
What also troubles me is that Ecology is taking on a larger role in decisions without the same level of accountability. Local governments are accountable for their permitting decisions and often have to defend them when challenged. Ecology can influence those same decisions without bearing the same responsibility. That''s not a good recipe for a clear or predictable process. Uncertainty is often enough to stop a project before it''s ever approved or denied. When the rules are harder to navigate, and no one knows who has the final say, projects cost more and are harder to deliver. Washington can plan for future climate impacts without creating new barriers to housing, and Ecology should revise this proposal accordingly.