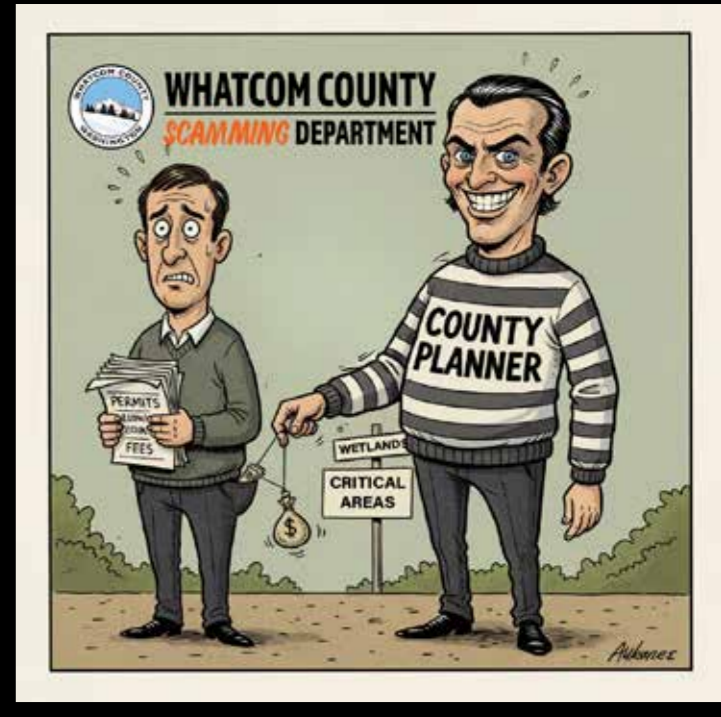


WHEN WHATCOM COUNTY PROTECTED A CORRUPT NATURAL RESOURCES PLANNER & THEN BECAME (EVEN MORE) CORRUPT ITSELF



THE VICTIMS

John and Janice Dierdorff - bought 4470 Castlerock Dr October of 2008. Held the property for 10 years before going to the Whatcom County Planning Department and applying for a Critical Areas Review to build their dream home.

Miguelina Beckwith - the elderly seller of 8358 and 8366 Blaine Rd. Was having issues selling her properties due to wetland issues, mainly brought up by the Whatcom County Planning Department.

THE PROPERTIES

THE PARTNERS IN CRIME

Matt Mahaffie - the corrupt Whatcom County Natural Resources Planner who used his position as wetlands regulator to devalue properties and buy them on the cheap after he forces them to give up all hope.

Mark Personius - the Director of the corrupt Whatcom County Planning Department who allows his planners to run their own side businesses extracting wealth from trusting landowners. Then he lies for the planners when they get caught scamming the public.

Tom Bressenden - the Whatcom County Natural Resources Planner who worked for the county and at Matt Mahaffie's Skagit Wetlands and Critical Areas LLC. He was approving his boss's permits.

Lara Kratzer - the live-in girlfriend who used her name to buy 8358 Blaine Rd to allow Matt Mahaffie to hide the fact he owned property he was regulating. She had never owned, nor has owned property since.

Amy Dearborn - the Whatcom County Natural Resources Planner who Matt Mahaffie referred the lot mitigation questions to when people asked and knew that Mahaffie was a planner and conflicted.

The Greens at Loomis Trail

Plat was finalized: 2002 Recorded Plat: AF 2040305824
 Original Subdivision Permit: LSS1994-00004 (approved 1994)
 Wetlands Mitigation Permit: MIT2003-00021 (supplemental)

4470 Castlerock Dr was bought by the Dierdorff's 2007 for \$150,000

July 2017 they entered into a deal with a builder to develop their property

4470 Castlerock Drive
July 28, 2017
Dierdorff's Critical Review Determination By Whatcom County Natural Resources Planner Matt Mahaffie:
 "Mahaffie writes "Property is fully encumbered by wetland buffer and a reasonable sized home cannot be accommodated without a reasonable use exception or some other solution"

July 3, 2018
Email from JWR Design to wetlands company
 "Attached is the site plan for Castlerock. We just need a mitigation plan to take to Matt (Mahaffie)"

August 28, 2018
Builder meets with Mahaffie at Planning Department
 Is told that the property will need to be mitigated and to provide a WETLAND DELINEATION to move forward along with an application for reasonable use.

Let's Talk About DUAL AGENCY in the Transactions
 DUAL AGENCY is when a real estate agent represents both parties in a transaction. It is allowed in WA State under RCW 18.86.060. But it is strictly regulated.
 Agency is a term for certain fiduciary duties that are owed to a client: like maintaining confidentiality, loyalty, and not disclosing material information, or sometimes MUST disclose conflicts and/or material information.
 How did the parties settle on the price? Seller listed just one property with her agent for \$99,000. How did she end up selling one for 30% less, and the other she GAVE AWAY?
 You think that being a REGULATOR OF WETLANDS in Whatcom County would be something that should be DISCLOSED to the other party? You bet. They have an UNFAIR ADVANTAGE.
 Hiding that he was a REGULATOR behind a shell company does not absolve the duty to disclose the unfair advantage either when negotiating.
 Just look at how Mahaffie got 8366 Blaine Rd FOR FREE and then turned around and is selling mitigation credits for \$400,000 an acre!

2017
BTW, the 7+ acre property that Ms Beckwith GAVE AWAY now that it's in Mahaffie's control, is now being used to MITIGATE OTHER WETLAND PROPERTIES that are at the planning department for... \$400,000 an acre!!! (see story at bottom)

2018
4348 Castlerock Drive
 The same time that the Dierdorff's are dealing with the determination from Matt Mahaffie the owners of the next to the last lot left started their permitting process.

July 18, 2019
Mukhtar Singh Bhullar applies for Natural Resources Assessment at (adjacent to Mahaffie's future property)
 NOAR issued by Joshua Fleischmann
 Finding: "Staff conducted a site inspection and did not identify regulated critical areas and/or buffers that would be impacted by the proposed development"
 This shows adjacent property in same subdivision had no wetlands issues Evidence that 2002 mitigation was working and recognized by county

2019
January 19, 2019
Mahaffie applies for 4-bedroom septic system for 8358 Blaine Road
 Critical: This is BEFORE April 2019 closing - sale still "in feasibility" and ends up putting property in his live-in-girlfriends name to avoid scrutiny.

8358 & 8366 Blaine Rd
August 1, 2019
Mahaffie goes under contract for BOTH 8358 and 8366 Blaine Rd.
 • Uses the sellers agent as his representative creating a DUAL AGENCY situation.
 • Doesn't DISCLOSE that he is a REGULATOR for the County controlling Wetlands.
 • Convinces seller that the property is nearly worthless, but doesn't disclose that his department is the reason.
 • Convinces seller to pay for the back property taxes due to miscategorizing the

2020
April 19, 2020
Critical Areas Applications Filed for Blaine Road properties in Mahaffie's MOM and GIRLFRIEND's NAMES to hide suspicion
 • Lara Kratzer (Mahaffie's girlfriend) purchases 8358 Blaine Road for \$70,000
 • Assessed value: \$59,000
 • Dead Goat Properties LLC (Mahaffie's company) purchases 8366 Blaine Road for \$10,000
 • Assessed value: \$103,067
 • Total purchase: \$80,000 (49% of combined assessed value: \$162,067)
 • Purchase structure:
 • \$30,000 total cash down payment (\$20K on 8358, \$10K on 8366)
 • \$23,854 of that \$30K is immediately used from seller proceeds to pay back taxes
 • \$50,000 seller financing (promissory note to Miguelina Beckwith)
 • Seller receives \$0 cash at closing

Mahaffie later lies saying that he paid the back taxes (he didn't), then claims "\$103K effective investment" from investigator. (actually \$30K total we have the RECIEPTS from the tax payment!)

2021
April 2021
Critical Areas Applications Filed for Blaine Road
 • Lara Kratzer applies for critical areas delineation for 8358 Blaine Road
 • Reta Stephenson (Mahaffie's mother) applies for same for 8366 Blaine Road
 • Initial assignment: Matthew Mahaffie (auto-generated)
 • Actual reviewer: Natural Resources Planner Tom Bressenden (colleague, still county employee) The application reviewed by Mr. Bressenden who at the SAME TIME is WORKING FOR MAHAFFIE'S COMPANY, SKAGIT WETLANDS and CRITICAL AREAS, LLC

May-July 2021
Tom Bressenden Issues Determinations
 Tom Bressenden accepts critical areas assessment in 21 days from application. Makes 8366 Blaine Road "virtually unbuildable" per Haggard's report
 * This is a MISDIRECTION to make it look "unbuildable" but there was no intention to build anything. It was going to be a wetlands bank and sell credits for \$400,000 an acre.

June 2021
4 Bd Septic System Inside Wetland Buffer Approved for 8358

2022
December 2021
Mahaffie and his live-in Girlfriend Close on 8358 Blaine Rd
 Sales price: **\$210,000** Profit: **\$149,000**
 Purchase Price: **\$70,000** (950% return in 2 years)
 Down payment: \$20,000 cash & Seller Finance: \$50,000

2022
April 12, 2022
First buyer goes under contract "pending feasibility"
 4470 Castlerock Dr, Blaine, WA 98230
 Listing History from MLS

Listing ID	Address	Open House	History	Tax	Property Map	Flood Map
181897	4470 Castlerock Dr, Blaine, WA 98230					
STATUS	07/13/2023	10:00-12:00 PM	07/18			
STATUS	08/18/2023	10:00-12:00 PM	07/18			
STATUS	09/18/2023	10:00-12:00 PM	07/18			
STATUS	04/23/2023	10:00-12:00 PM	07/18			
STATUS	04/23/2023	10:00-12:00 PM	07/18			
COMPARISON	04/07/2023	08:00-12:00 PM	07/18			
PRICE	04/07/2023	08:00-12:00 PM	07/18			
PRICE	04/07/2023	08:00-12:00 PM	07/18			

April 22, 2022
After feasibility period first buyer BACKS OUT
 Could it be from the "all the wetlands" that Mahaffie told the Dierdorff's about?

Wait...I'm guessing Mahaffie knew all this back in 2017, so he really did F&K over the Dierdorff's for 3 years on purpose!

July 2022
Mahaffie SELLS 4470 Castlerock Property
 No improvements made just lied to the Dierdorff's to scam them out of their property
 Sales price: **\$229,000** Purchase Price: **\$80,000**
 Profit: **\$149,000**
 (~186% return in less than 2 years)

2023
June 2023
4470 Castlerock Drive New Owners
New Owners Apply for Building Permits
 Reviewed by Nathan Goldschmidt (Natural Resources Planner)
Goldschmidt Issues NOAR
 Goldschmidt's finding: "Because the developer of the 2002 Loomis Trail subdivision had mitigated for the wetlands on Bulanov's property, Bulanov could build on the lot WITHOUT A REASONABLE USE EXEMPTION"
 This directly contradicts Mahaffie's 2017 NOAR which said property needed "reasonable use exception" and full mitigation plan
 Confirms property was buildable all along and that the 2002 mitigation was valid and recognized all along

2023
April 22, 2022
WAIT! Looks like on the SAME DAY that the sale fails from feasibility... someone in the corrupt Whatcom County Planning Department Issues a memo out of the blue!
KEY FINDING: It looks like the wetlands mitigation was completed as part of 2002 plat process after all!
 Talk about the TIMING! Now Mahaffie's agent can tell the NEXT BUYER they will have no problems with the permitting!

2024
April 2022
Tom Bressenden transfers from Planning & Development Services to Public Works
 Still a Whatcom County employee (not a "former employee" as Haggard claimed in her "investigation")
 Stays at Mahaffie's private company "Skagit Wetlands and Critical Areas LLC"

June 2022 - THE MITIGATION SHAKEDOWN
REMEMBER on 8366 Blaine Rd, Mahaffie essentially STOLE 7+ ACRES from the seller—property that wasn't even for sale!
 Mahaffie lives in Skagit County, what exactly was he doing looking at property in Blaine? At the time, there were over 400 vacant land listings in Whatcom County. Right around that time however, there was a property owner looking to develop right down the street. They had a wetlands report showing NO WETLANDS, but Whatcom County REJECTED it!
 SOMEHOW...wetlands ended up being found and SURPRISE SURPRISE, an offer was made to MITIGATE THE WETLANDS ON A NEIGHBORING PROPERTY!
Mahaffie signs agent for Royal Emerald Motors (REM) while being a REGULATOR OF WETLANDS to mitigate 3/4 of an acre from 8366 Blaine Rd for... \$300,000+
 Estimated value: **\$2.8 million** in mitigation credits for a **\$10,000** lot Mahaffie said was worthless?
 When people complained about the clear conflict, the corrupt Director of WC Planning Mark Personius, said it was A-OK to lie, cheat, and STEAL!

COMPLAINTS FILED WITH PROSECUTING ATTORNEY
 LOOK FOR THE NEXT INFOGRAPHIC THAT DESCRIBES THE CORRUPTION AND DECEPTION THAT OCCURS WHEN CITIZENS DARE TO FILE A COMPLAINT
 WWW.WHATCOMPLANNINGCORRUPTION.COM

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