# Ecology logo. A state of Washington shape separated into three bands of color; light blue, green, and dark blue. a sun sits in the middle of the light blue band.MEETING SUMMARY

**WRIA 13 Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Committee**

June 26, 2019 | 9:00 a.m.- 12:30 p.m. |[committee website](https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias__1962/37325/watershed_restoration_and_enhancement_-_wria_13.aspx)

## Location

Tumwater Fire Dept.
311 Israel Rd. SW
Tumwater, WA 98501**Committee Chair**

Angela Johnson
angela.johnson@ecy.wa.gov**Handouts**

1. Water Right Acquisitions
2. Workgroup Meeting Summary

## Attendance

### Committee Representatives and Alternates \*

Angela Johnson (*Ecology – Committee Chair)*

Theresa Nation *(WDFW)*

Donna Buxton *(City of Olympia)*

John Kliem *(Lewis County)*

Paul Pickett *(Squaxin Island Tribe)*

Amy Hatch-Winecka *(WRIA 13 Salmon Habitat Recovery Lead Entity, ex-officio)*

Erin Hall (*residential construction industry¸ Olympia Master Builders)*

Julie Rector (*City of Lacey)*

Dave Monthie (*environmental interests, Deschutes Estuary Restoration Team)*

Sarah Moorehead (*agricultural interests, Thurston Conservation District)*

Linda Oosterman (*Thurston PUD)*

### Committee Representatives Not in Attendance\*

Thurston County

City of Tumwater

City of Rainier

Nisqually Tribe (*ex-officio)*

City of Yelm *(ex-officio)*

City of Tenino (*ex-officio)*

### Other Attendees\*

Gretchen Muller *(Cascadia Consulting)*

Jimmy Kralj *(ESA)*

Paula Holroyde (*League of Women Voters)*

Wendy Steffensen (*LOTT)*

Mike Noone (*Ecology*)

Adam Peterson (*Thurston Conservation District)*

Kelsey Collins (*Ecology)*

\*Attendees list is based on sign-in sheet.

## Welcome

Angela and Gretchen kicked off the meeting with meeting location logistics. Committee members and other meeting attendees introduced themselves around the room. The group reviewed the meeting agenda.

## Approval of May Meeting Summary

Angela received the following comments about the May meeting summary:

* Committee members provided clarifications on the following meeting summary sections:
	+ Updates and Announcements
	+ Squaxin Island Tribe – Tribal Treaty Rights
	+ Growth Projections
	+ Workgroup Report/Subbasin Delineation
		- One comment requires review by Tom Culhane (Ecology) for accuracy.

*All of the proposed changes were made. The Committee approved the May meeting summary, contingent upon review mentioned above by Tom Culhane.*

## Updates and Announcements

Angela provided updates from Ecology.

* NEB final guidance will be published near the end of July 2019. Angela will provide an update and overview when the final guidance is available.
* File sharing – Ecology has approved the use of Box, and it is going to be set up for the Committees in the near future.
* The technical workgroup has recommended starting discussions on project types. If members are not part of the technical workgroup, they can send project ideas to Angela.
* Thurston County requested a training from Jim Pacheco (Ecology fish biologist) on the Toe-Width Method for measuring and calculating instream flows. Kevin Hansen, Thurston County hydrogeologist, will continue to use this method for measuring streams in Thurston County. Any relevant data may be made available to the Committee – a future update will be given on the status of the Thurston County project.

## Workgroup Report and Subbasin Delineation

Angela and the workgroup members provided a summary of the previous workgroup meeting – see workgroup meeting summary from 6/20/19 for more details.

Reference Materials: 6/20/19 WRIA 13 Workgroup meeting summary

The workgroup summary was presented and included a brief explanation of the following items:

* Data needs
	+ Next steps for data acquisition matrix – a revised version will be available based on Committee input.
	+ Considerations for assumptions made in plan, adaptive management, and clearly describing in plan what was or was not addressed and why.
* Growth projections
	+ Thurston County provided initial growth projection data from TRPC. The workgroup supported making a recommendation to the Committee to use this initial dataset as a starting place, pending answers to questions on the data that needed to be provided by TRPC.
* Subbasin delineations
	+ Workgroup recommendation to move forward with “Alternative 2” as a draft subbasin delineation.

Committee discussion:

* Growth Projections
	+ Angela presented responses from TRPC to questions that the workgroup had posed regarding clarifications on the type of data and what assumptions were made for the initial projection. These questions and responses will be provided to the Committee in a separate document, after they are approved for distribution by Thurston County.
	+ The workgroup recommended that the committee move forward with the TRPC methodology as a starting point. Committee members agreed with the recommendation. HDR will continue to work with Thurston County to analyze the initial data, and will provide a technical memo on the results in August.
	+ Next steps will be for workgroup and Committee members to review the initial data when it is distributed, and propose different growth projection scenarios based on this review. HDR will work on these scenarios later this summer and bring results to the Committee for review.
* Subbasin Delineation
	+ Based on HDR’s technical memo for subbasin delineation alternatives, the workgroup made the recommendation to move forward with “Alternative 2” as a draft subbasin delineation. This delineation will continue to be used for initial growth projection analyses in coordination with HDR and Thurston County. Committee members agreed with the recommendation.
	+ The Committee may revisit the draft subbasin delineations in the future if they feel it is necessary to revise them to better align projects with impacts that need offsets.
* Other considerations
	+ The workgroup recommends starting discussions about projects. This will be on the agenda for the next workgroup meeting.
	+ Continue to consider how to incorporate climate change information in the plan.

## WRIA 13 Water Rights Assessment and Acquisition Opportunities

Kelsey Collins, Dept. of Ecology Acquisitions Lead, provided an introduction to water right acquisitions and related projects. She also discussed the process for completing a water rights assessment for WRIA 13 in order to address a data gap that was identified by the group. Ecology has resources available to assist the Committee with this assessment. This information could be used by the Committee when identifying projects. A handout with an overview of this information was provided to the group and is available on the Committee website.

Reference Materials: Water Right Acquisitions handout

Committee members raised several questions/comments following the presentation:

* The Committee would like to know the number of permit-exempt domestic wells in WRIA 13. While Ecology’s database is limited, Thurston County has a robust dataset with this information. HDR is coordinating with Thurston County to make this information available to the Committee.
* Water rights may be relinquished after 5 years of non-use, however there is not a clear comparison for this regulation on permit-exempt domestic wells. If information is available on water rights that are close to relinquishment, there may be an opportunity for the Committee to consider these for future acquisition projects.
* Consolidation of permit-exempt wells into Group A systems might not count, unless there is a net offset. A possible “action” in the Plan might be a request for Ecology to expedite a water right change for consolidation proposed in the Plan.
* A water right acquisition is an uncertain process, with the time for completion dependent upon many variables. While Ecology cannot give a definite timeline for completion, examples of past projects have taken anywhere from 6 months to 20 years.
* Ecology funding, in addition to the competitive Streamflow Restoration Grant Program, may be available for water right acquisitions.
* The Committee proposed several ideas for focus areas within the watershed when considering a water rights assessment:
	+ Lower/Middle Deschutes (where many existing permit-exempt wells are located and studies have documented stream flow impacts).
	+ Areas that are undergoing land use changes now or in the near future ( within the next 5 years) and may have water rights to retire.
		- Suggestion to look into Spooner Farms as it may be redeveloped.
	+ Previous water rights assessments in WRIA 13.
		- Suggestion to look into assessment done for the Cities of Yelm, Olympia and Lacey to see if that information can be made available. Lacey reported that the assessment has been confidential information covered under an agreement signed by the three cities.
	+ Thurston CD is currently starting a water right analysis for their own purposes, but will coordinate with Kelsey and share relevant information with the Committee.
* The Committee agreed that Kelsey should move forward in starting a water rights assessment for WRIA 13. The Committee will have an opportunity to provide input on the Scope of Work for this assessment.
* Kelsey will continue to work with this Committee moving forward throughout the assessment process, which is anticipated to take about 6 months. If Committee members have specific water rights or areas within the watershed to focus on, this can be built into the analysis – they may contact Angela or Kelsey with such information.

# Field Trip Brainstorm

The Committee discussed several ideas for a field trip for the August 28th meeting. Sites were proposed that would show examples of project types or existing watershed conditions. Angela will keep a list of field trip ideas that the Committee can use for future dates as well.

The Committee agreed that the August 28th meeting date will be used to visit the LOTT reclaimed water ponds and recharge basins at their Hawks’ Prairie site. Wendy Steffensen will provide the Committee with some background information before the site visit, and will guide the tour for the group.

Future site visits may include:

* Smith Ranch – if possible, the Committee may visit this site in September.
* Other restoration projects.
* Cochrane Park in Yelm – this is outside of WRIA 13, however the Committee thought it may be useful information.
* Full day tour of site visits along the “top to bottom” of the watershed. Amy Hatch-Winecka and Sarah Moorehead may be able to provide some ideas for this in the future.
* Committee members may suggest locations for a “self-guided tour” that members can do own their own time to see existing watershed conditions.

## Public Comment

*No comments.*

## Action Items for Committee Members

* There will not be a meeting in July.
* Next meeting is August 28th, 2019 at the City of Lacey Community Room – 420 College St. SE, Lacey, WA 98503. The Committee will have a brief meeting before the field visit.
* Technical workgroup meeting will be scheduled for July/August.
* Contact Angela or Kelsey Collins for additional questions on water right acquisitions, or the water rights assessment for WRIA 13.
* Squaxin Island Tribe reminded members to keep in mind “Actions”, to make sure they are on the timeline to consider for the plan. For example, lessons from WRIA 11 include: how do you track progress and document real water benefits? Also, consider updating Instream Flow Rules in WRIA 13 with current methodology.

## Action Items for Ecology:

* Angela will schedule the next technical and subbasin workgroup meeting.
* Angela will continue to work on a file-sharing for the Committee.
* Angela will have the May meeting summary reviewed by Tom Culhane for final approval, as mentioned above.
* Angela will provide more information on the NEB review and revision process.
* Angela will organize the August field trip (and will invite other WREC groups as appropriate), and will coordinate future field trips as mentioned above.
* Angela will provide groundwater and TMDL maps from previous workgroup meetings, as requested by some Committee members.