# 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 14 Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Committee**

July 9th, 2020 | 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. |[committee website](https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias__1962/37326/watershed_restoration_and_enhancement_-_wria_14.aspx)

## Location

WebEx**Committee Chair**

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

1. Project update
2. Draft template for policy recommendations
3. Potential Policy and Regulatory Recommendations Tracking Sheet
4. Proposals for Potential Plan recommendations

## Attendance

### Committee Representatives and Alternates \*

Angela Johnson (*Ecology – Committee Chair)*

Seth Book (*Skokomish Tribe*)

Dana Sarff (*Skokomish Tribe*)

Ron Gold (*Mason PUD 1)*

Darin Hall (*Mason PUD 1*)

Kevin Shutty (*Mason County*)

Kaitlynn Nelson (*Thurston County)*

Larry Boltz (*Agricultural interests, Mason Kitsap Farm Bureau)*

Ken Gill (*City of Shelton*)

Barbara Adkins (*Mason CD, ex-officio)*

Darrin Masters (*WDFW)*

Paul Pickett (*Squaxin Island Tribe*)

Erin Hall (*Residential construction industry, Olympia Master Builders*)

Fern Schultz (*Department of Health, ex-officio*)

### Committee Representatives Not in Attendance\*

WA Sierra Club (*Environmental interests)*

### Other Attendees\*

Susan Gulick *(Sound Resolutions)*

Jimmy Kralj (*ESA*)

Peter Schwartzman (*PGG*)

Mike Noone (*Ecology*)

Stacy Vynne McKinstry (*Ecology*)

Tom Culhane (*Ecology*)

Paula Holroyde (*League of Women Voters*)

James Reyes (*Mason PUD 1*)

Erica Marbet (*Squaxin Island Tribe*)

## Welcome

Due to recommendations from Public Health Officials to not hold in person meetings to prevent the spread of COVID-19, the June 2020 WRIA 14 meeting was held via WebEx conference. Angela and Susan kicked off the meeting and provided instructions for participants to participate remotely. Committee members introduced themselves. The group reviewed the meeting agenda.

A collection of interactive slides was put together to promote engagement during the meeting. [These slides can be found on Box.](https://app.box.com/s/z91i8hr7pi97s88hx1wnjr709tl3dh79)

## Approval of June 2020 Meeting Summary

* Paul Pickett raised concerns about how next steps for policy proposals were captured in the meeting summary. As such, it was suggested that Angela and Susan discuss with Paul outside of the meeting, and reach agreement on how to edit the meeting summary and the meeting summary was not approved.
* Angela will distribute a revised for approval at the August 2020 meeting.

## Updates and Announcements

Angela provided updates from Ecology:

* WebEx meetings will continue for the foreseeable future.
* Ecology staff are currently under a mandatory furlough schedule. Angela will be furloughed July 10th, 17th, 24th, and one day per month from August through November.
* The WRIA 59 watershed plan update was adopted by Ecology. More information about this plan is available on the Ecology website.

# Green Diamond Resource Company as an *Ex-Officio* Member

Time was scheduled on the meeting agenda for the committee to approve Green Diamond Resource Company as an *ex-officio* member, however, the representative was not in attendance. This will be discussed during the August 2020 committee meeting.

## Projects

This portion of the meeting was used to provide updates on the Project Subgroup meeting, Water Rights analysis work, and Managed Aquifer Recharge projects.

* Summary of Project Subgroup Meeting
	+ The subgroup gave direction to PGG for a GIS analysis to narrow down the list of potential water rights acquisition opportunities.
	+ Kevin Hansen (Thurston County) explained his experience with windshield surveys in Thurston County for some of the parcels identified through PGG’s work.
	+ The group discussed outreach opportunities to engage with landowners about water rights acquisition opportunities.
	+ The group discussed the Schneider Creek Source Exchange Project, its merits, and considerations for its inclusion in the plan. Thurston County will continue to look into this project to bring forward for potential inclusion in the plan.
* Water Right Analysis
	+ PGG provided the committee with an update on their water rights analysis work.
	+ They examined rights with high rates of use, examined Google Earth for evidence of irrigation, and examined Group A systems in close proximity of municipal connections.
		- Google Earth Analysis found evidence of irrigation on 9 of the 13 top water rights (parcels with at least 50 irrigated acres).
		- Mason PUD, City of Shelton, and the Department of Health expressed concerns about this proposed approached and the Squaxin Island tribe suggested identifying systems with inefficiencies or problems that might benefit from municipal connections. Committee members expressed interested in this type of analysis.
* Managed Aquifer Recharge (MAR) Analysis
	+ PGG’s GIS team is in the process of compiling data layers for the analysis. PGG will hold off on adding additional information including wastewater treatment plants and deep well locations.
	+ Surficial geology, not soil types, will guide this analysis.
	+ Maps are expected to be ready prior to the next project subgroup and committee meetings.

## Plan Development

* Committee members used an interactive slide to rate their opinions of the review process for the drafts of Chapters 1-3 of the plan. All those committee members that voted stated their experience was above average.
* Ecology is in the process of reviewing the comments received.
* Timeline
	+ Mid-August target for compiled draft plan. Additional work may be outstanding for chapters 5, 6, and 7.
	+ The proposed timeline may shift due to furlough and participation demands.
	+ The only statutory deadline is the June 30th, 2021 review deadline for Ecology.
* Angela reviewed some of the [comments received](https://app.box.com/s/t2sngsagewbetk67qs6pwet4gie3jeyw) on Chapters 1-3 with the committee, prioritizing comments that Committee members flagged as “yellow” or “green”. The Committee discussed paths forward for suggested edits. Angela will incorporate agreed upon suggested edits, working with Committee members as appropriate.
* Angela noted that suggested edits to Chapter 1 would be reviewed by Ecology leadership.
* Angela will distribute the revised draft which will be included in the initial compiled plan for August.

## Policy and Adaptive Management: Plan Recommendation Proposals

* Susan provided the committee with a proposed process for the review of policy proposals.
	+ The proponent will send all proposals by the end of the month for the next month’s committee meeting.
	+ Following the meeting, the proponent will review concerns and produce a matrix of the status of each proposal.
	+ The proponent will follow up with members who expressed concerns and revise proposals as needed.
	+ The facilitation team will survey members to gauge support or opposition for proposals. This survey will also be used to solicit input or improvements.
	+ Based on the survey, policy proposals will be put into four categories
		- Proposal withdrawn
		- Proposal added to plan for committee review
		- Those proposals that need refinement will be added to the next meeting agenda for further discussion
		- Those without adequate support will be removed from consideration.
	+ Proposals that are removed can be put back on the table depending on comments or consensus building.
	+ Proposals not included in the plan will be mentioned in some capacity to document the work of the committee and policy proponents.

Adaptive Management

* The committee used this portion of the meeting to discuss the adaptive management components of the plan.
* The committee first discussed what information should be tracked through an adaptive management process:
	+ Members proposed tracking surface flow, groundwater elevation, climate variables, offset locations and amounts, drought conditions, project implementation, project effectiveness, land use changes, building permits, and the number of wells.
	+ The Squaxin Island Tribe noted the importance of tracking plan implementation and the distinction between environmental monitoring related to streamflow and water estimates.
	+ Ecology noted that tracking the impacts of individual wells is difficult to measure and noted that monitoring should be focused on projects to ensure they accomplish their intended purpose.
	+ Other committee members agreed, but noted the importance of tracking new wells to help guide future decision making processes.
* The committee then discussed what should happen if tracking shows significant diversion from expected outcomes
	+ Thurston County proposed reconvening the group, or discussing outcomes with county commissioners.
	+ The Squaxin Island Tribe proposed implementing drought limitations or other restrictions until water uses are accounted for. Additionally, the Tribe proposed establishing an implementation group to continue coordination into the future.
* Funding considerations were discussed and members were asked if they supported a coordinated ask to the state legislature for funding to support adaptive management.
	+ Committee members were in agreement behind a coordinated legislative request.
	+ The Squaxin Island Tribe noted that a legislative request should not be the only funding consideration and mentioned their proposal to increase permit-exempt well fees and the need for an inter-local agreement.

New Policy Proposals

* The committee discussed five new policy proposals from the Squaxin Island Tribe
* Permit-exempt Well Limits
	+ This proposal would establish limitations for PE wells, and is based on the levels set in the WRIA 1 rule.
	+ Both Mason and Thurston County need to review the proposal further and look into rulemaking requirements and cannot support this proposal until that happens.
	+ Several committee members expressed concerns over the differences between WRIA 1 and WRIA 14 and whether or not it is appropriate to use the same established limitations for both watersheds.
		- Ecology noted that the proposal proponent will need to justify the limitations in the proposal.
	+ It was also noted that this should be clarified to apply only to new permit-exempt wells
* Implementation and Durability
	+ This proposal would explain processes to ensure plan implementation.
	+ The Squaxin Island Tribe needs to work with Thurston County, Mason County, and Ecology to add explanatory language before the proposal can be fully vetted by the committee.
	+ It was mentioned that this language could potentially be included in another section of the plan, as opposed to a separate policy proposal.
* Monitoring and Research
	+ This proposal would be affiliated with adaptive management and would assess research needs and data gaps.
	+ Committee members discussing this proposal will consider monitoring and research needs as well as data gaps, and will bring this proposal back to the committee for consideration either as part of adaptive management or as a separate proposal.
* Instream Flow Rules
	+ This proposal would constitute a recommendation that instream flow rules should be revised to address streamflow protections.
	+ Mason PUD cannot support this proposal without additional information
	+ Mason County will track this proposal and how it takes shape in WRIA 15, and Thurston County needs to discuss this proposal with County Commissioners before agreeing to rule changes.
	+ WDFW is interested in the proposal but would like additional information.
* Funding
	+ This proposal would increase the permit-exempt well fee to support plan implementation and funding of an implementation group.
	+ Thurston County needs to review this proposal with County Commissioners before they can agree to rule changes.
	+ Mason County proposed examining the current fee structure to see how much money goes towards the state vs. local sources.
	+ WDFW agreed that funding sources need to be seriously considered.
	+ Ecology strongly suggested that the Squaxin Island Tribe reach out to Olympia Master Builders and discuss this proposal as they expressed concerns over increased fees. (OMB representative was not present for this discussion).
	+ Mason-Kitsap Farm Bureau raised concerns about the fee structure and whether or not these would be annual or recurring fees.

## Public Comment

* No public comments were provided.

## Action Items for Committee Members

* The next committee meeting is August 13, 2020 from 9:00 am to 1:00 pm
* Project subgroup meeting is August 4, 2020 from 1-3:30 pm
* Committee members who intend to submit revised or additional plan proposals should submit them to Angela and Susan ahead of the August meeting.
* Committee members with action items for project development will continue to provide information to the project subgroup and Committee.

## Action Items for Ecology

* Angela and Susan will work together to develop and Adaptive Management Framework based on the discussion at this meeting.
* Angela will distribute additional plan proposals that are received.
* Angela will distribute Draft Chapter 4 and associated technical memos in the next several weeks.

## Action Items for Technical Consultants

* HDR will continue work on the projects identified for their analysis.
* HDR will work with Ecology to update technical memos for distribution.
* PGG will revise the water rights analysis at Committee direction for prioritization.
* PGG will continue work on the MAR analysis.