

To: Members of the WRIA 15 Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Committee

From: Larry Boltz, President Mason-Kitsap Farm Bureau

Date: March 3, 2019

Subject: Proposal for Ex Officio Membership

Introduction: Farm Bureau is a voluntary, grassroots advocacy organization representing the social and economic interests of farm and ranch families at the local, state and national levels. By providing leadership and organizational skills, Farm Bureau seeks to gain public support for issues affecting farm families.

I am President of the Mason-Kitsap Farm Bureau, member of Washington State Farm Bureau Board of Directors, agriculture representative on WRIA 14, Mason County Conservation Board of Supervisors, member of Mason County Voluntary Stewardship Program.

Relationship to the Watershed: Our organization represents farmers within WRIA 15, and we are affected by activities and regulations within the watershed. The health of the watershed and water supply availability directly affects our ability to farm.

I was a South Kitsap resident for 50+ years, working on farms in this area. Owned a working farm that had been in production since 1918. Currently own a working 60 acre farm in Mason County.

Interest in the Committee and Watershed Restoration and Enhancement plan: We are keenly interested in the plan because of our direct connection to and reliance on the environment. Restoration and enhancement of the watershed done in a responsible fashion are key to our success in agriculture. We rely on a stable supply of water and the use of the land to raise food.

Benefit to the Committee: As the people closest to the resources of WRIA 15, farmers are key to the success of any efforts to restore and enhance the watershed. However, such efforts must be conducted in a manner that is harmonious with our careful stewardship of the land and our efforts to raise food. This makes us an essential partner at the table.